

Tweed Shire Council upgrades storage infrastructure

For Tweed Shire Council, implementing a centrally managed and scalable storage solution was a significant step towards developing an IT infrastructure that would provide a greater level of control over data, increase system performance and reduce operating costs. SureBridge IT worked with Tweed Shire Council to provide the service, support and advice resulting in the deployment of a Hitachi Storage Area Network (SAN) in October 2002.

John Bruggy, IT Supervisor, said "Our infrastructure consisted of a large number of leased servers and storage disks that were expensive to maintain and failed to provide the required control over data. We wanted a solution that would provide both financial and system performance benefits".

"After discussions with SureBridge, with regard to Hitachi Data Systems, we purchased a Thunder 9200 SAN with a capacity of approximately 270GB, configured as a RAID 5 Array, with a dedicated "Hot Spare" disk. We considered other options, however the Hitachi SAN was a totally scalable solution that was competitively priced and Hitachi provided a superior level of service and support."

John also highlighted the benefits of the SAN solution stating, "Since the implementation of the Hitachi Thunder 9200 SAN we have experienced many benefits. There has been a significant improvement in data access speeds, a decrease in back-up times and a reduction in server costs due to minimal server hard disk storage requirements. Staff are also more productive because the need to transfer data from server to server, when leased servers are returned, has been eliminated."



Marcus Armour, System Administrator, Tweed Shire Council with 9200 SAN

Marcus Armour, System Administrator, also commented, "We are impressed with the service provided by both SureBridge IT and Hitachi Data Systems. SureBridge worked closely with our technical staff to identify the best solution. The level of technical expertise displayed by both companies, the product's features and the continuing support has been first rate."

"A critical part of the solution also involved the introduction of a StorageTek L40EM Tape Library and ARCserve back-up software to allow our data to be backed up from a central point."

Tweed's upgraded infrastructure gave the council the opportunity to host Project Aurion. The Councils of Lismore, Tweed, Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, Rous Water and the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library are using innovation to deliver new human resource software deployed by Brisbane based Aurion HR software house. The councils are utilising Tweed's infrastructure to deliver a shared system and have formed a regional partnership for human resource management. Tweed Council hosts this infrastructure with all other Councils accessing it via the web, in return, the project is providing significant cost savings for each Council.

Another component of the Tweed solution was the implementation of 'thin client' architecture, which was designed to reduce the number of operating systems and enable greater control of the network. "After attending a presentation conducted by SureBridge, we were convinced that by deploying thin client technology, we would be in a position to provide the council with significant cost benefits, central control of all desktops, reduced licensing costs and a reduction in time spent rolling out upgrades. We plan to have a third of the organisation running on Citrix software and Wyse terminals in the near future," Marcus Armour stated.

Tweed Shire Council is located on the QLD/NSW border. The Shire covers 1303 square kilometers and is just over one hour's drive from Brisbane and thirty minutes from the Gold Coast. With a population of 74,000 people, the Shire is home to 37km of natural coastline, wetlands and estuarine forests, lush pastoral and farm land, the entire basin of the Tweed River and three world-heritage listed national parks, a truly unique and diverse environment.