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Gloucester City Council use NetVault™ to safeguard local government

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— Andy Bowler, project manager in IT Services at Gloucester City Council

The Company

Based in offices in the heart of historic Gloucester docks in southwest England, Gloucester City Council (www.gloucester.gov.uk) provides a wide range of services to its residents, businesses and visitors, working in partnership with its various communities and other organisations to ensure the highest standard of service delivery. Concentrating on the provision of local services and investing in the long term future of Gloucester, the City Council serves a population of over a hundred thousand and approximately 5 million tourists who pass through the city every year.

The Challenge

Centralised in the offices of the City Council, the IT services department look after over seventy servers running key applications and systems for all aspects of local government – housing benefit, parking, council tax, environmental health, planning and payroll for the City Council itself. Managing and safeguarding the data held on these servers has caused problems in the past as solutions used have proved unreliable. "Backing up the servers to

individual DAT drives became too complex and unreliable; we needed to find a better way of carrying out our backups and restores," starts Andy Bowler, project manager in IT Services at Gloucester City Council. "Furthermore, the solution we used was not user-friendly and not enterprise-ready. We looked around for alternative solutions but what we saw were too expensive. Budgets are always tight and staff time valuable, so we were after a solution that was easy to use and cost effective. More importantly, we needed a solution that would carry out centralised backups under a single umbrella and one that would backup to other media formats and fast. That's when we discovered BakBone Software's NetVault." (www.bakbone.com)
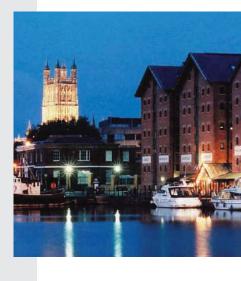
The Solution: NetVault

NetVault backs up over 300 GB a night for the City Council and most importantly, their Exchange server is never taken offline. "We are currently backing up all our data every day to three disk libraries exploiting the pseudo tape library functionality of NetVault. We then move all the data backed up that evening to tape the next day," continues Andy Bowler. "We especially welcome the added functionality of NetVault 7.4 that will allow us to carry out incremental backups and never have to do a full one again. We shall be shortly starting to use that functionality too."

Cited as the real advantages of NetVault were the GUI front-end of the product, which clearly shows that the product understands what is involved when backing up and restoring data, and NetVault's impressive speed when backing up to the City Council's LTO drives. "Time spent checking log files from our overnight backups has been slashed, it only

takes 10% of the time, therefore we can get on with other jobs. Moreover, we really appreciate NetVault's well thought-out network implementation. From one single viewpoint, we can monitor our seventy servers and it is all so easy; just point your mouse and click and you can see exactly what is going on."

The Future

"NetVault has been a tremendous boon to us here in IT services. It certainly has made our lives much easier," concludes Andy. "It has proved itself to be more powerful than our previous solution and for that reason we can see the real benefits. Not only does it carry out our backups quickly and let us see what it has done, but it lets us get on and look after other important issues. In other words, it makes it easier for us to help our colleagues at the City Council guarantee the services we offer to the residents, businesses and tourists of Gloucester."

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