



CASE STUDY

West Bromwich Building Society



Business continuity solution results in robust and compliant data protection

Overview

The West Bromwich Building Society (affectionately known as “West Brom”) is a leading provider of financial services and is the seventh largest building society in the UK. Proudly independent, West Brom is owned by and run for the benefit of its members and prides itself on outstanding commitment to the financial success and security of its members, as well as exceptional service and providing a warm environment for its people to work, learn and develop their careers.

Founded in 1849 and with deep roots in the West Midlands heartland and beyond, West Brom has 170 years’ experience in helping members buy their own homes and save for the future. Today a workforce of more than 500 staff serves a customer base of around 430,000 members.

Having provided Business Continuity services to West Brom since 2007, Wavenet* has established a solid, effective and collaborative relationship that enables them to deliver contracted services to the highest levels of performance measures and agility. When West Brom approached Wavenet to assist with the review of its data backup requirements, Wavenet was naturally eager to demonstrate both the business and technical benefits of implementing a solution that fully integrated with West Brom’s existing business continuity arrangements.

At a glance

Industry: Finance

Sites: 1 - 50

Employees: 100- 200

Objectives:

- To upgrade legacy infrastructure to a more cost-effective solution
- Remove reliance on tape backup through a single backup solution capable of protecting LAN and DMZ environments
- Accommodate a fluid IT environment and offer a broad support a diverse IT landscape

Solutions:

- Business Continuity

Results:

- LAN and DMZ environments both protected by the same backup solution
- Unrestricted access to backup data for recovery at no extra charge and marked
- Reduction in resource overheads associated with NetWorker and tape backups

Situation

Knowing the importance of securely handling the data of so many members, West Brom knew that its existing legacy data protection infrastructure (NetWorker) was nearing its end-of-life and so used this as an opportunity to seek a more cost-effective alternative whilst ensuring data was still readily-accessible in the process.

This new solution would need to meet a specific set of requirements; one that would remove the reliance on tape backups, be a single backup solution capable of protecting both local area network (LAN) and demilitarised zone (DMZ) environments to the same backup infrastructure, and which provided the scalability needed to align with the business' growth and strategy plan. Most importantly, it would need to be delivered and operational by the time the existing support from the NetWorker infrastructure came to an end.

A strict selection process followed, with the business considering different competitive solutions on the market. Wavenet took a consultancy-led approach with no preconceived notions. A series of collaborative technical workshops helped both parties thoroughly understand the end-to-end requirement and complete due diligence. A proof of concept of the solution followed with extra focus on Oracle backup and specific DMZ security requirements, not to mention comprehensive support for a broad range of application protection integration.

Given the sensitive nature of their financial data, it was critically important to West Brom for security to be embedded across the service and also that aggressive recovery point objectives could be met in order to ensure data protection.

Mark Wilson, Business Continuity Solutions Architect for Wavenet explains: "Following initial technical discovery meetings and subsequent workshops, it became clear to Wavenet that West Brom had some very specific requirements which in many respects did not align to a standard cloud-based backup service offering. Primarily, the need to keep all elements of the solution secure within the society's existing private dual data centre environment with the assurance that no data would leave West Brom's secure network. These requirements inspired a bespoke, scalable solution design which is fundamentally underpinned by a dedicated resilient architecture and Veeam's extremely broad suite of backup and availability features.

The solution also had to accommodate a very fluid IT environment which offered a broad support matrix to accommodate a diverse IT landscape. Leveraging Veeam's advanced application and storage integration capabilities, Wavenet was able to meet the defined recovery point objectives with minimal impact to live services.

In addition to the data protection service the society required robust reporting and alerting capabilities, this is a strong inherent feature within Veeam, when coupled with Veeam One the result is a powerful and informative data centre and backup management offering."

Solution

Wavenet selected its industry-leading data backup solution as the best fit for the job. Powered by Veeam, and providing unparalleled backup and recovery, the solution would assure that West Brom's critical and sensitive data would be secure in transit and at rest, compliant and recoverable in the event of a breach or disruption.

The benefits of Wavenet's mature and tried-and-tested approach include the initial setup and the subsequent training and ongoing support, as well as a help desk which provides first like support which is underpinned by second and third line support through Veeam. Recovery management support is also available in the event of a disaster recovery (DR) scenario, and both hardware and application support is available on a 24/7/365 basis with defined SLAs via a dedicated support desk or invocation process for critical issues.

In line with the specific brief requirements, West Brom's LAN and DMZ environments are both protected by the same backup solution, and a granular backup capability meets the organisation's data retention policies which range from every 15 minutes to a monthly basis. With backups coming directly from shared storage, this results in a significantly reduced backup window and network load. Additionally, all off-site data is held and stored in Wavenet's Aston-based ISO 27001, Tier 3 aligned data centre which functions as an extension of West Brom's secure network. This provides West Brom with unlimited and unrestricted access to all backup data for recovery at no extra charge and contributes to a marked reduction in resource overheads associated with both NetWorker and tape backups.

Wavenet's solution incorporates resilience at all points within the design, with performance-optimised deduplication and compression at both source and target. In addition, the storage capacity and data archive option is scalable, allowing for effective data management, while a comprehensive, real-time monitoring system enables detailed and customisable reporting for all aspects of the backup service. All of this is available centrally via a single pane of glass GUI, providing easy to use self-service task-based management that also supports full API automation.

Results

The solution has measurably improved the society's backup capability and efficiency resulting in a more robust and compliant protection of their data.

For the future, Wavenet is now looking into cloud solutions that will potentially benefit the business and has started discussions around their business continuity planning and operational resilience.



Wavenet's backup solution has enhanced the way we manage and monitor our IT backup & recovery strategy on an everyday basis.

We involved members of our IT specialist and architecture teams who worked closely with Wavenet support teams from the entire backup/recovery design, development, and implementation phases through to validation.

Wavenet's insight and expert knowledge and experience allowed us to understand the full scope of the benefits and features we were receiving with their solution. The product provides intelligence and functionality at the speed required by the fast moving tech industry.

Lak Singh

Database Administration Manager, I.T.
Services and Solutions at The West Brom



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