wavenet

CASE STUDY

Birmingham City University

BIRMINGHAM CITY University

Year-round secure operations ensured with work area recovery and robust security

About the customer

Birmingham City University (BCU), located in the heart of Birmingham, is a prominent higher education institution with over 30,000 students from around 100 countries. BCU offers a wide range of vocational courses across its two main campuses, serving four faculties. The university is highly regarded for its practice-based learning approach, which has made its graduates some of the most employable in the country. BCU contributes £270 million to the regional economy and supports thousands of jobs in the area.

The challenge

Clearing is a crucial period for BCU and the largest opportunity to fill course places. The clearing process poses significant IT challenges due to the high volume of student applications.

The university recognised the need for not only a robust platform but also the physical infrastructure to deliver this crucial service from the city centre campus to effectively manage the high volumes of traffic and mitigate any risk of downtime that could impact student recruitment.

To prevent this, BCU urgently required local access to a work area recovery (WAR) centre with robust cybersecurity to maintain secure, continuous operations permanently.

In previous years, they had used Wavenet's* WAR centre as a hot standby for 200 contact centre staff during the clearing period. They wanted to upgrade this to a permanent service for year-round access and not just at clearing time. The potential loss of the building and network, affecting the whole work environment, posed a catastrophic risk. Reliable backup solutions were essential to safeguard against such disruptions.

At a glance

Sector: Education
Employees: 8,000
Solution: Business Continuity & Cyberguard

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"Having Wavenet as our partners means everything. We had already placed our trust in them after years of using their services before committing to a more permanent arrangement."

Matt Peers
Senior Project Manager at
Birmingham City University

*The initial engagement was with Daisy, acquired by Wavenet in 2024.

The solution

Wavenet delivered an optimal solution for Birmingham City University's challenges, which included:

- **Permanent Work Area Recovery Centre:** Ensuring year-round access.
- **Resilient Power Infrastructure:** Assuring uninterrupted operations, even in network outages and disruptions.
- **Robust Security:** Through a comprehensive 'always available' secure environment.
- **Meticulous Integration of IT Systems with Data Protection and Recovery:** Our specialist team integrated the university's infrastructure into the WAR centre, ensuring BCU staff could quickly access their virtual desktops and incoming telephone calls. This allows them to quickly pick up where they left off once they arrive. BCU also holds full data backups, which are securely stored in our vault at their data centre in Farnborough. This includes around half a petabyte of BCU's data, with 400 virtual machines available for immediate recovery.
- **24/7 Accessibility:** Providing available facilities and ready for action whenever needed.
- **Emergency Strategy:** Developed an emergency strategy with BCU staff so that they can act quickly and relocate as needed.

The results

The university felt the benefit of:

- **Work Area Recovery (WAR) Centre:** We are geographically aligned to respond quickly and effectively in the event of a major incident. The proximity of our WAR minimised inconvenience for the university's staff, ensuring efficient workflow continuity without significant changes to their commute and work environment.
- **Technology Expertise:** Our WAR boasted resilient power infrastructure, high availability IT systems,
- **Multidisciplinary Management:** Our team of specialists provided expert project management, network support, engineering knowledge, regulatory compliance, risk management, security, and peace of mind throughout the process.
- **Robust Security:** Comprehensive, 'always available' secure environment to protect from cyber/ransomware attacks.
- **Data Protection:** The data protection measures we implemented gave BCU peace of mind, knowing that their critical data and systems were secure against cyber threats.
- **Ongoing Support:** The initial success led to a five-year contract, allowing continuous support and preparedness. We are in the process of offering additional services, including future opportunities for computing students and staff development programmes to keep the curriculum current and relevant.
- **Mitigating Cost Risk:** Significant cost reductions can be achieved by minimising disruptions, enduring continuous operations, preventing revenue loss, preserving their reputation, reducing unnecessary expenses, reducing recovery costs, and enabling long-term business sustainability.

> "The peace of mind that comes with having fortified security and a robust IT infrastructure is indescribable. The inclusion of work area recovery is essential for continuous and trusted connections during clearing. It provides us with the capability for uninterrupted and safe operations, crucial for maintaining our service delivery and supporting our students effectively."
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> **Matt Peers**
> Senior Project Manager at Birmingham City University

Let's talk
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