StorageCraft®
an Arcserve company

ShadowProtect and OneBlox improve business continuity and increase efficiency at NCH.

Client Profile

Company
The National Concert Hall

Country
Ireland

Industry
Entertainment

Number of employees
40 full-time
65 part-time

Solutions
ShadowProtect
OneBlox 4312

About NCH

The National Concert Hall is the home of music in Ireland. Located in Dublin's city centre, it houses the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Choir Ireland, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Music Network, Crash Ensemble and Music Generation.

It hosts over 1,000 events each year and has a mission to foster and celebrate the appreciation, knowledge, enjoyment and pure love of music as an integral part of Irish life.

In excess of 300,000 ticket holders attend events at the NCH each year. Circa 56% of the NCH's ticket sales are made online via its website, with the remaining split across its ticket office and call centre. The NCH uses AudienceView to process ticket sales on its website and a content management system at the backend.

The organisation has approximately 40 full-time members of staff and circa 65 part-time employees.

The challenge

With a busy schedule of events, maintaining a secure and accurate database is critical to ensure smooth event management and customer service. The responsibility for this lies with Philip Deacon, IT Manager for the NCH.

The NCH's 20 virtual machines and one physical server hold over seven terabytes of production data, which must be backed up throughout the day on a 2:1 basis. The following application servers are backed up at different frequencies from once per day to twice per hour:

- Exchange
- AV Server
- SQL Server
- App & Utility servers
- File Servers
- Security Servers
- Ticketing application servers and .net sites

The solution

Originally, the NCH utilised four Synology NAS units to store its backup data but decided to consolidate this to improve efficiency. Philip engaged Larry Doyle from managed service provider Paradyn, to help with the project, and Larry recommended deploying StorageCraft OneBlox over their 10GbE network for on-premise backup storage.

"When we first deployed StorageCraft, we had been working with four NAS and we reached a point where two of them had to be updated with bigger capacity. The cost of the upgrades would have been comparative to the cost of buying OneBlox, but they wouldn't scale in the way that OneBlox does. Our data needs are continually growing, so the move to a scalable solution made it a worthwhile investment. The compression that OneBlox offers also meant that we only needed to buy a single OneBlox initially," said Philip.

Integration was straightforward, and the new system was soon up and running.

> 66 It took about half an hour, and 20 minutes of that was the unboxing! It only takes 10 minutes to set it up – with a few hours to configure all the settings. 99
>
> **Larry Doyle** *Head of MSP, Paradyn*

With so much data at stake, and as a government organisation, Philip and Larry have naturally put extensive security infrastructure in place. However, OneBlox also offers reassurance that data could easily be restored should the worst happen.

"OneBlox's Continuous Data Protection functionality means that it takes continuous snapshots of all the data stored on the OneBlox, which is immutable to ransomware. This was an attractive feature for the NCH," explained Larry.

NCH deployed Veeam to back up their VMware hosts to OneBlox. However, as the workload increased, the team found that backing up large SQL VMs was causing servers to lag during production times.

"Occasionally, we found that the Veeam backups were causing, for example, busy SQL servers to pause and disconnect client sessions, and we couldn't allow that to continue as it was impacting the customer experience," said Philip.

To solve this issue, StorageCraft ShadowProtect was deployed to back up critical servers as frequently as every 30 minutes within production hours. Veeam backups were taken only during the website's quiet times to rectify servers at a VMware level.

Results

StorageCraft ShadowProtect allows NCH to execute regular backups without interrupting the servers which is essential for maintaining smooth day-to-day workflows. As well as the financial benefits, consolidating its infrastructure to a single OneBlox has allowed the NCH to increase efficiency levels across the organisation and reduce energy consumption, as well as storage footprint.

The experience with StorageCraft has been so positive that Philip and Larry are now considering adding an additional OneBlox for off-site replication and data backups storage, in order to strengthen NCH overall data security and integrity posture.

> 66 We now only need to power one OneBlox solution instead of four different ones, so it's much more power efficient. This has helped us reduce our carbon footprint which is important as a government organisation. 99
>
> **Philip Deacon**
> *IT Manager for the NCH*

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sales@storagecraft.eu

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