

S U C C E S S S T O R Y

Hitachi Storage Solutions at Work

Sigtuna City Council

INDUSTRY Government

SOLUTIONS Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery

Software—Hitachi Data Protection Suite, powered by CommVault®

Services—Provided by Exello



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*Lars Eneslatt
IT Manager
Sigtuna City Council*



Local Government in Sweden Slashes Backup Time, Enhances Public Online Services with Hitachi Software

Sigtuna City Council's traditional data backup system was unable to cope with the increasing volume of data associated with its range of online public services. Working with local reseller Exello, it identified the Hitachi Data Protection Suite, powered by CommVault®, as the best solution for its backup needs in terms of speed, reliability and scalability. Since deployment, backup time has fallen from 39 hours to 16 hours, while data volume has grown from 1.3 terabytes (TB) to 3.5TB.

Founded in the tenth century and giving its name to the region surrounding it, Sigtuna is a small but historically important city in central Sweden. It lies just north of Stockholm and has a population of around 7,000 people.

Supporting Services for the Community

The local city council has the responsibility to provide its residents with 24-hour online access to its public services, as specified by Sweden's central government. As part of its efforts to meet these requirements and provide the local people with a superior level of service, the council implemented—among

other things—a system to allow parents and students to communicate with each other online. Teachers can post test results and school reports, parents can report sickness and students can check their timetables through the online application known as Dexter.

Making these applications available was just part of the task faced by the Sigtuna Council's IT department, however. Its traditional backup system was old, and it had not been updated for some time. Sigtuna City Council IT Manager Lars Eneslatt explains: "We were finding it difficult to get key tasks completed in an acceptable time frame with the old backup system. Backup sessions that were supposed to take

place overnight were taking up to 39 hours to complete—using up a lot of network bandwidth, which could then not be used by the online services applications or our business critical internal systems."

The council was already backing up about 1.3TB per week, but with the addition of Dexter, this figure increased to 3.5TB. The team realised it was essential that the backup issues be resolved in order to keep up with this expansion and anticipated further growth in the future. It needed a solution that was fast, reliable and scalable but also simple to use, with a single interface for all backup systems. The council operates 106 servers, and around 300 systems, including Oracle databases, Microsoft® Exchange for e-mail and Novell and Solaris operating systems. All of these needed to be managed through this single interface.

A New Solution

Sigtuna City Council tested a few of the options available before turning to local reseller Exello to offer guidance as to the most suitable solution to meet the council's needs. Exello recommended the Hitachi Data Protection Suite, powered by CommVault, for its high-performance data protection in complex heterogeneous networks like Sigtuna's and its simplicity of use.

"We hadn't considered Hitachi before, but had used CommVault previously and been impressed," says Eneslatt. "When Exello showed us the Hitachi Data Protection Suite, we really liked the speed and performance of the technology. The fact that the solution included CommVault technology as well confirmed our decision that this was just the thing for us."

The council purchased the Backup and Recovery software that forms part of the Hitachi Data Protection Suite and was designed to efficiently move data and make it easy to find and recover data when needed. Support is provided by technicians at Hitachi Data Systems, who ensure that the solution is always working at optimal performance.

Exello is also involved, providing a first point of contact for administrators at Sigtuna.

Eneslatt states, “We’re very pleased with the product and the service, both from Hitachi and Exello. We have the ideal combination of local, native language support and technical expertise from the solution supplier.” The team at Sigtuna was also impressed with the single backup interface, which they found easy to install and use and makes scaling the backup system simple.

The whole project, from the initial decision to update the backup system, to implementation of the Hitachi Data Protection Suite solution, took just six months, and the team is already enjoying the benefits. It is now able to perform backup sessions

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of the 3.5TB of data in its system in just 16 hours, a time savings of nearly 60 percent compared to the old system. This translates into better performance and efficiency for all the applications and programs running on the Sigtuna infrastructure, thanks to the increased network bandwidth availability. Not only does this make life easier for employees, but it also means that the online services are more responsive, giving citizens an enhanced online experience. In addition, there is now no cause for concern as the council’s data resources continue to grow; the scalability of the Hitachi Data Systems solution means that the increasing volumes will still be handled smoothly, quickly and reliably.

The total cost of ownership of the backup system is expected to decrease over time, as the simple interface requires less training and administration, and enables improved capacity utilisation.

Preparing for the Future

Having seen the excellent results from the backup system overhaul, Eneslatt and his team at Sigtuna City Council are keen to introduce more innovations to its IT—and particularly storage—environment to drive further improvements in its services. They are currently considering the options for implementing a storage area network (SAN) at the council’s data centre, and intend to review the available solutions from Hitachi Data Systems as part of this process.

“We’re also thinking about extending the Hitachi Data Protection Suite features that we use by implementing the archiving software as well,” comments Eneslatt.

“This would be really valuable in helping us better track e-mail and other important content in line with government regulations.”

Overall, Sigtuna City Council has seen a huge improvement in its internal performance and external service provision through the implementation of the Hitachi Data Protection Suite. Eneslatt concludes, “By leveraging Hitachi industry-leading technology we look forward to making Sigtuna a better place to live and an example for other areas of Sweden in the years to come.”

Exello

Exello is a system integrator with a primary focus on storage and backup solutions for critical IT environments. In addition to IT solutions, Exello offers an extensive training program for the storage networking industry.

Exello’s curriculum affords an open system perspective with a wide range of courses, focusing on real world solutions that are adjustable to the needs of a diverse audience. Its teachers are all experts within their knowledge area, and have a long experience of advanced technical education and training.

For more information, visit:
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SS-108-00 DG December 2007