



“We have continued to be impressed by Hitachi Data Systems’ and Viglen’s dedication and professionalism. The smooth and painless migration from our old Hitachi system to the new Adaptable Modular Storage model reinforced our belief that the decision to stay with the two companies to install an updated, more capable and scalable system, was the right one.”

*Peter Holt
 Senior Support Specialist
 De Montfort University*

De Montfort University

INDUSTRY Education

SOLUTIONS **Virtualization, Modular Platform, Enterprise Platform, Storage Management**
Hardware — Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2500 (2), Hitachi Universal Storage Platform® VM
Software — Hitachi TrueCopy® Synchronous, Hitachi Device Manager
Services — Consultancy, implementation and planning services provided by Hitachi TrueNorth™ Partner Viglen Storage Group



De Montfort University Stays with Hitachi Data Systems and Viglen to Update Central Storage System

With more than 18,500 students, De Montfort University (DMU) needed to update its central storage system to provide a more scalable and future-proof solution. It chose to implement a storage system from the Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2000 family in order to cope with a higher volume of data, boost system performance and support virtualization.

In 2005, DMU implemented a new central storage system to serve all its campuses, which previously stretched across a wider area in Leicester and Bedfordshire. The storage area network (SAN), which was based on Hitachi high-end modular storage, enabled students and teaching staff to access information from any of the faculties. It also allowed the university to access and back up all of its information in one complete system. However, after five years this platform was coming to the end of its lifecycle and the university needed an updated system that would cope with increased demand for storage. It also needed to accommodate the IT department's new thin provisioning, virtualization and data replication requirements.

A New Storage Platform to Support New Storage Needs

Support Specialist at De Montfort University, Peter Holt, explained: "While our old storage system from Hitachi worked well and enabled us to successfully consolidate all data onto a single system, students' and staff's storage requirements had changed significantly over the five years that the SAN had been in place. We needed an updated platform able to cope with much greater usage of new data and multimedia applications and increased volumes of email."

DMU put out a tender and considered a number of potential solutions. Having worked with independent specialist storage reseller Viglen in the past, DMU was keen to continue working with the reseller to find a storage solution that met the university's evolving needs. After carefully considering a number of options, DMU decided to remain with Viglen and to implement two new Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2500 systems. These are used as active central units to deliver services to the university and course information and student communications to university administration and business systems.

"We chose to stay with Viglen and to deploy the Hitachi storage platform because of the excellent experience we'd had in the past working with both companies and because we felt assured that the solution would be reliable and that it would match our need, both today and in the future," said Holt.

Seamless Migration to New System

A further motive behind DMU's decision to opt for Viglen and Hitachi Data Systems was that their proposed solution offered a very clear migration path from the existing storage system. A Hitachi Universal Storage Platform® VM was used



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to migrate data from the old to the new platform. This highly reliable and available solution enables simple data replication across heterogeneous storage systems. It enabled DMU to virtualize all data behind the Universal Storage Platform VM and continue accessing information online whilst the data migration to the new platform took place.

“The migration to the new system was incredibly painless and easy. It was meticulously well planned and both Viglen consultants and Hitachi engineers worked around the clock with us to ensure that data was migrated smoothly. We managed to migrate up to 30TB of data in a week. The whole project took just four weeks and in total we only had two hours of downtime,” recalled Holt.

To support the hardware deployment, De Montfort University also installed software to ensure it could get the most from its new solution. Hitachi TrueCopy® Synchronous software is used to ensure nondisruptive access of data from one site to another while Hitachi Device Manager software provides DMU with a user friendly management interface to the storage systems. Device Manager is used for day-to-day management of the storage systems, enabling DMU to create and allocate new storage, deliver thin provisioning and monitor system performance.

A More Efficient and Effective Solution

The new platform is now being used by over 21,500 onsite students and staff with between 7 and 10,000 concurrent users. In addition to providing a centralized storage system, the platform also enables database delivery and server virtualization. In the six months that the platform has been live, DMU has managed to connect over 25 percent more systems without any perceived reduction in performance.

Holt explained, “The new storage solution with its advanced thin provisioning capability is proving highly effective and is enabling us to do much more than we could before. We have noticed a marked increase in speed and even one of the faculties has noticed the significantly quicker access to information.”

For the foreseeable future, the new Hitachi storage solution amply meets the university’s storage requirements. However, DMU is keen to build on this solid storage platform to deliver even greater speed and efficiency and keep up with students’ escalating need for data storage.

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