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*Barry Sanders  
Chief Information Officer  
Endeavour Foundation*



## Endeavour Foundation

### INDUSTRY

Services: Non-government Organisation

### SOLUTIONS

Modular Platform, Storage Management, Virtualisation

**Hardware** — Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2300

**Services** — Provided by Hitachi TrueNorth Channel Partner SureBridge IT

## Hitachi Data Systems Lays the Foundation for Easily Accessible Storage at Australian Non-government Organisation

In Australia, most organisations struggle to store their business records for the mandated seven years. For Endeavour Foundation, this challenge is increased tenfold, as it has to retain information beyond 70 years and ensure its data is accessible at a moment's notice. To establish the platform that would allow the organisation to scale up its storage for a lifetime, Endeavour Foundation chose Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage.

### Background

Endeavour Foundation is one of the largest non-government organisations (NGOs) in Australia, supporting and providing opportunities for people with a disability. The organisation was started in 1951 by a group of parents and friends, who recognised the need for education, care and support services for children with an intellectual disability. Today, Endeavour Foundation supports around 3,000 clients through a mix of services and businesses at over 240 locations located down the eastern seaboard of Australia.

At its core, the organisation believes that people with a disability can make valuable contributions to the community. Endeavour helps to provide employment opportunities, which include everything from domestic help and medical care to work placement and training services. To provide these services it has offices spread throughout the country, with each office generating and storing highly critical data, which needs to be preserved for each patient. As the organisation continues to grow and add

more patient records to its database, storing and archiving the information has become an increasing challenge.

### A Highly Regulated Environment

Ensuring that data is stored and easily accessible can pose a challenge even for ordinary businesses, as records are required to be kept for seven years under Australian regulatory and compliance laws. As an NGO operating in a heavily regulated sector, Endeavour must store its records for the life of each patient. These records can include care reports, medical records, images, emails from caregivers or relatives and job placement information. Endeavour's data storage requirements are also compounded by the fact that it operates a lottery to help fund its work, which places additional requirements on recordkeeping.

With over 240 offices and 1,200 employees, Endeavour Foundation faced a challenge in ensuring that all patient information was accurate and up to date. For example, a caregiver in northern Australia could enter new information on a patient; however, this information

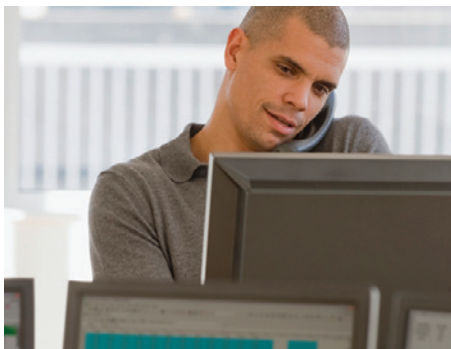
may also need to be accessible in another office for government reporting purposes. With some offices located in very remote areas with low bandwidth links, this often presented a problem, as sites also kept separate records on the same patient, which often was not saved on the organisation's main server.

### Storage and Backup Challenged

When Endeavour Foundation's Chief Information Officer Barry Sanders commenced his role in 2005, the organisation was managing its backup and storage process manually. The process was for IT staff to ring the various offices and talk non-IT personnel through the process of mounting tapes. Often these people were specialist caregivers who were highly trained to look after disabled clients — not to manage technical issues. This ad hoc process of managing the organisation's information was not only time consuming and inefficient, but it also drained resources from the organisation's primary mission of caring for its clients.

"A site tended to keep their own records, while head office would also have another set of records. When it came time to report across the organisation it was really apparent that some numbers just did not match up. To add to this confusion, we were spending a lot of time talking to non-technical staff about how to load backup tapes," said Sanders.

Sanders knew that he needed to streamline the organisation's storage and that the status quo could not continue. "None of our in-house staff had the skills to implement the storage infrastructure. We needed a partner who was specialised in storage and who



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could do a knowledge transfer rather than just a 'box drop.' We had to get the financials right, the solution right and a vendor who was not just going to stick something in and then run," Sanders continued.

As part of the competitive tender, vendors were asked to submit proposals to be evaluated. However, it was the fact that Hitachi Data Systems hesitated to immediately submit a proposal that impressed Endeavour. Unlike the other vendors, Hitachi Data Systems and Hitachi TrueNorth Channel Partner SureBridge took the time to speak extensively to Endeavour Foundation before putting forward a proposal and recommendation.

"They were true partners in the process. They took the time to understand what we were trying to do from a business point of view before they rushed in with a solution," Sanders recalled. "Given that we operate in a highly regulated environment with specific requirements on how to store patient data, it was vital for us to talk through our business needs rather than the vendor making assumptions and deploying a piecemeal solution," he said.

## Making It All Work

SureBridge talked extensively to Sanders about Endeavour's business plans and processes. In the short term, Sanders had plans to centralise the organisation's data to overcome the information management issues it was experiencing. This would be followed by virtualising the server fleet to reduce overall energy consumption, reduce data centre space and streamline overall management of Endeavour's IT environment. To achieve this, Sanders would need to investigate the use of storage virtualisation and thin provisioning in tandem with server virtualisation technologies.

With this in mind, SureBridge recommended the Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2300, which would allow Endeavour Foundation to manage its growing volumes of data and continue to scale as the organisation's needs grew. In addition, as the server fleet became more virtualised, the organisation could easily take advantage of Hitachi storage virtualisation technology.

Endeavour Foundation was deeply impressed with the level of consultation Hitachi Data Systems and SureBridge provided. As the deployment process started, the Endeavour team continued to be impressed by SureBridge's commitment in ensuring that the implementation was in line with Endeavour's organisational objectives.

"SureBridge had a tried and proven project plan that they used. We were even given a checklist of the things that we needed to prepare in our data centre before the equipment arrived, right down to the precise amount of rack space we would need. By the time the equipment arrived, setup and installation happened very quickly. We were up and running inside a month," said Sanders.

## Getting on with the Job

The volumes of data in the form of thousands of customer records spanning years of operation are now safely stored and readily accessible. As a result, Endeavour Foundation no longer needs to worry about reporting cycles or whether all patient records are consistent.

"With the Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 solution in place and a partner like SureBridge we can just get on with the job. There's still a lot of work ahead of us. Like many businesses, we are going through a period of rationalisation to reduce the amount of overhead required to manage a large server fleet and cut out any unnecessary costs. This has made our jobs much easier, without impacting client care or safety," Sanders concluded.

Specialist caregivers in remote locations can now just do what they do best and not concern themselves with how to load a tape into a server to run backups. The organisation feels comfortable they won't have any data compliance breaches and, ultimately, can feel confident that all data is safely stored in its systems for a lifetime.

## About SureBridge

SureBridge IT is an Australian owned and managed service provider contributing a unique understanding of the IT Industry for over 19 years. SureBridge IT provides information technology-based solutions and support as well as end-to-end customer service on a 24/7 basis. Experienced consultants design, implement and monitor technology solutions every step of the way so that customers can focus on growing their businesses.

SureBridge IT partners with clients 24/7 and for the long term, taking the worry out of negotiating with vendors and technology providers while monitoring systems performance and improving access and protection to valuable information.

For more information, visit:  
[www.surebridge.com.au](http://www.surebridge.com.au)

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