



## CASE STUDY: NORTHERN STORAGE SUITE

# ACTUALLY DELIVERS

Lipson Community College is a secondary school based in Plymouth with 1450 students between the ages of 11 and 18. The specialized nature of the school's curriculum, combined with Lipson's focus on each matriculating student, requires a robust IT infrastructure to support the school's daily communications and data storage needs. Indeed, Lipson was the first school in the region to use electronic white boards for classroom instruction, and over the years they've invested heavily in information and communications technology.

But, as Colin Hampton, Lipson's Network Manager admits, with a user base of 1700, it's a challenge to address every IT need on a limited budget. It's a particular challenge to meet the ever-increasing demand for data storage – a daunting challenge for any learning institution, let alone one as diverse and specialized as Lipson. According to Hampton, *"Just throwing more capacity on to the network did not seem a cost effective or efficient solution to the problem. A combination of user education with flexible storage quotas seemed the answer."*

Hampton is charged with managing an information and communications network (ICT) that consists of Windows 2003 Server and Windows XP Pro client PCs on a mainly wired LAN with a 1GB fibre backbone distributing the LAN to main areas of the College and 100Mb switched copper to the desktop. Small wireless LANs have been installed in specific areas. Servers include two domain Controllers which are also file and print servers and five application servers. The ICT encompasses over 750 PCs and laptops.



*"We tried using the built in Windows disk quota feature but that was difficult to manage and it was not flexible enough," said Hampton. "We searched the Internet and learned about Northern Storage Suite, which offered the flexibility, centralized management and reporting we needed, as our storage needs continued to escalate."*

Hampton originally installed Northern Storage Suite in 2002/2003 and has since standardized their storage management on the Northern storage platform.

*"Northern Storage Suite has allowed us to regulate the use of storage space to suit the resources we have available while enabling us to meet increased demand in a planned manner – without resorting to the typically reactive, quick-fix approach of just adding more storage."*

Hampton uses the Northern Storage Suite to set quotas on an individual or group level. He also finds the file blocking feature powerful and effective, and its integration with Active Directory simplifies overall management. The reporting engine gives Hampton insight into usage trends and is instrumental in anticipating and meeting demand and maximizing existing storage capacity.

*"Northern Storage Suite has enabled us to manage users' storage requirements efficiently, effectively and flexibly without necessarily resorting to additional expenditure on hardware," Hampton says, adding, "Plus, Northern's reseller has always provided very useful 1st level support, usually resolving issues that crop up, over the telephone. When we had a particularly difficult problem that required more in-depth investigation, they assisted by putting us in touch with the correct people at Northern, helping with the data gathering and enabling us to reach an expeditious resolution."*

Hampton sums up by emphasizing that Northern Storage Suite "achieves what it sets out to do" – which may appear to be a simple thing, but as anyone who's experienced first hand the gap that often exists between a software's promise and what it actually delivers, it is about as good an endorsement as a software vendor can hope for.



#### **ABOUT NORTHERN**

Northern is an international software company specializing in the development of reliable, flexible and easy to use solutions for storage management. Northern Storage Suite breaks Storage Resource Management down into four goals; to identify and reclaim wasted storage capacity, control user behavior, plan for future storage needs and make the end-users a part of the storage solution.

World-wide over 25,000 organizations and more than half of the companies on Fortune Global 100 use Northern software to bring control and order to their storage environments. The company serves a global market through its five bases of operations, Tampa [FL], Stockholm [Sweden], London [UK], Biarritz [France] and Munich [Germany].

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