

CASE STUDY

Future proof backup and business continuity.

CentricStor enables major retail group to plan for the future with confidence

When a major UK retailer needed a reliable solution that would meet its growing need to backup critical business data in an ever- diminishing window, it deployed Fujitsu's CentricStor solution.



Retail in the UK is a highly competitive sector and, in addition to getting a great experience when they go into stores on the High Street or the retail park, customers expect to be able to shop on-line, 24/7. With more and more business being done over the Internet the security threat posed from hackers, viruses and data corruption is significant, so having a reliable and completely dependable back-up regime is vital.

In addition, retailers are faced with the challenge of having to cope with a rapid growth in the amount of business information they need to store and retain. This in turn makes the challenge of backing up data – and the prospect of restoring it quickly in the event of an outage or systems becoming unavailable – even greater.

Faced with these issues and a backup system that had reached its limits, one of the UK's major retail groups decided to implement Fujitsu's CentricStor solution to provide a reliable, flexible and scalable backup solution that would meet all its current and foreseeable needs.

At the time, it had around four terabytes of data which needed to be backed up every night. Over the next seven to nine years this was expected to almost quadruple – to around 15 terabytes. It was important therefore that the solution would be able to scale to meet growing requirements and be capable of being incorporated into new, virtualized environments as well.



One of the key requirements was the capability to support cross-site replication to provide higher levels of resilience. The company wanted to be able to restore data quickly – to or from a remote site – if the need arose. The backup solution also needed to be easy to manage and provide adequate provision for long-term data retention, archiving and recovery.

Fujitsu's CentricStor was chosen as it was the most mature and complete solution and the only one that met all the 'mandatory' and 'desirable' requirements stipulated in the retailer's RFP. It also offered excellent value and the promise of a rapid return-on-investment.

CentricStor provided the retailer with the flexibility and scalability to consolidate all environments on to a common tape virtualisation technology and to leverage new high performance and high capacity tape drive technology, without compromising the existing server environment or over-provisioning. This helped maximise the value of the investment and helped to drive further cost-efficiency.

The system's versatile architecture enables the organisation to physically split backup resources so that a second off-site copy of data can be taken, thus eliminating the need for daily manual transportation of tapes. In the event of access to a primary site being lost, this provides a ready-made disaster recovery capability.

Another important aspect of the solution was CentricStor's unique data transfer capability. Data, once it is written to the disk buffer, can be migrated to tape independently of the host. Therefore the data flow does not need to revert through the backup server for the clone copy. This is important, as it significantly alleviates the ever increasing pressure on backup windows.

The full range of systems used by the organisation can be backed up using Centricstor, which supports AIX, OS/390 and i-Series systems, as well as Microsoft Windows. It also works with major tape library solutions, such as those from StorageTek and IBM, and popular backup management software including Legato, Veritas and Tivoli. This provides tremendous flexibility and once again helps to simplify management and maximise ROI.

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