

DATAFORT

Corporate finance boutique Excellion Capital eliminates risk to reputation and achieves FSA compliance with DATAFORT



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*Phil Schajer
Chief Operations Officer, Excellion Capital*

CHALLENGES

- All critical business services rely on single server
- Email protection and archival
- FSA Compliance process improvement
- Minimise employee involvement

SOLUTION

- High Availability service

RESULTS

- Business productivity improved
- Data loss minimised from 24 hours to 15 minutes
- Compliance officer requirement satisfied

Excellion Capital is a Corporate Finance advisory house, providing corporate finance as well as considering principle investments. Founded in 2007, the business has bucked the trend of some of the toughest economic years in recent history, successfully raising in excess of \$200 million for clients and completing over 50 corporate finance transactions with a combined value of more than \$1 billion.

As one of the UK's leading corporate finance boutiques the decision was taken that their DR plan no longer suited the growing complexity of the business. Rather than assign Excellion staff to handle backup tasks the decision was made to partner with a company expert not only in high availability systems but FSA compliance as well. DATAFORT was selected to provide a comprehensive business continuity, compliance solution. This solution would provide recovery from server failure within the office environment with a recovery time objective of 15 minutes plus off-site server imaging for disaster recovery delivered from the cloud and full data archival on a seven year rotation. This solution would reduce



disaster recovery time from over 24 hours to within minutes, comply with FSA legislation, protect customer data and aid continual excellent customer service.

Prior to using the DATAFORT service Excellion Capital relied on a backup tape rotation in order to safeguard its customer information and critical business data. This process not only proved time-consuming but created many opportunities for error should the tape be stored or labelled inaccurately, lost or mishandled during the rotation process. Moreover, the tape process did not give the necessary assurance of compliance with FSA data storage guidelines. These require that customer data is held securely for at least seven years in secure premises located at least 7 miles away from the primary business location so that it is recoverable within a reasonable time frame. With equipment refreshes happening on a three year rotation recovering data from an aging tape environment could become problematic. Not worth the risk to Excellion, as failure to comply with FSA guidelines could result in significant financial penalties.

Tape backup systems only backup data in the evening which meant in the event of server failure, not only could system recovery take in excess of 24 hours, with only last night's backup to rely on, up to a full day's information could be lost. In the time-sensitive industry of corporate finance, the potential for lost data coupled with lost productivity was untenable.

In contrast, the service from DATAFORT, chosen for its security, reliability and efficiency, brings Excellion Capital dramatically reduced recovery times – from in excess of a day to less than two hours and the potential for lost information from an entire day to only a few minutes prior to point of failure. This improvement is based on the automated backup process taking place continually throughout the day storing data both in the office for quick access and at financial grade data centres. If the business server fails, the DATAFORT appliance is used as a resource to recover a functional server image. In the case of loss of access to the office, Chip System's Excellion's IT Support resource will provide a replacement server to Excellion's temporary office loaded with the backup data maintained in the data centre by DATAFORT.

Phil Schajer, Chief Operating Officer, at Excellion Capital comments, "Disaster recovery and the security of our data has always been of utmost importance to our business due to our determination to offer the very best service to our clients, which inherently requires as close to guaranteed 24/7 operations as possible. Therefore, having a robust and secure system – such as DATAFORT's – in place that can ensure our business is up and running in a matter of minutes should we suffer unexpected downtime is hugely reassuring."

Schajer continues, "Prior to implementing DATAFORT, the responsibility fell to us to

manually backup our data on tapes. Tape backup is certainly not without risk, nor is it timely or efficient should the worst happen – with the system potentially taking in excess of 24 hours should we experience downtime due to server failure. With this in mind, we needed a solution that would facilitate our ability to instantly comply with FSA regulation, have our server back online in minutes and enable us to continue to provide excellent customer service without disruption."

Schajer concludes, "With their experience in financial services and appreciation of the thorough reliance on constant data access, DATAFORT understood our business requirements immediately, which was extremely important to us given our industry and its levels of regulation. The highly proven solution from DATAFORT has given us peace of mind that our data is technically robust and forms a reliable foundation from which to serve our clients as accurately and efficiently as possible, no matter what."

DATAFORT Managed IT Services

MSP DATAFORT has been providing high security, FSA compliant services to the UK financial and legal services industry since 2000. With their award winning high availability and cloud services, DATAFORT brings enterprise grade security and continuity within the reach of smaller businesses.

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