OBJECT FIRST

Newnham College Futureproofs Backup Storage with Object First

Introduction & Executive Summary

Newnham College is one of the 31 constituent colleges of the University of Cambridge, with over 200 staff and around 700 students working—and in many cases, living—on its grounds.

As ransomware concerns, compliance requirements, and system complexity continued to escalate, Newnham College found its existing IT backup storage environment was no longer fit for purpose.

The promise of backup storage with true immutability, seamless Veeam integration, and streamlined management that requires no security expertise ultimately led Newnham College to work with Object First.

The Challenge

Before Object First, Newnham College used a mix of traditional NAS devices and direct-attached storage as its primary backup storage. This resulted in a number of key issues:

- **Latency:** The time to restore backups frequently stretched to several hours.

- **Frequent errors:** Regular backup job failures necessitated frequent manual intervention.

- **Inaccuracies:** Recovery testing revealed inconsistencies in more than 15% of backup sets.

- **Security issues:** A lack of advanced security features such as immutability put data at risk for alteration or deletion.

- **Compliance risks:** A combination of the above issues risked the College falling foul of strict legal requirements for data protection and retention by educational institutions under NIS2.

To address these issues, Newnham needed a new backup storage solution that was not only more dependable, but which also incorporated advanced security features like immutability.

"Object First's commitment to understanding our needs... ensured a smooth transition and immediate benefits."

IT Manager at Newnham College

Rebecca Woollard

Company:

Newnham College

Industry:

Education

Country:

UK

Solution:

Ootbi by Object First

Results:

Faster backup and recovery times, improved scalability, and a more robust long-term storage strategy.

The Solution

Rebecca Woollard, IT Manager at Newnham College, explained the process of selecting a new backup storage solution:

"We reviewed emerging trends and the future direction of the industry, prioritising solutions with class-leading support, a strong focus on UK partnerships, and seamless alignment with our existing Veeam environment. This approach ensured we selected a solution that not only met our immediate requirements but also positioned us well for long-term success."

Newnham College's IT partner, DMS (Design and Management Systems), proved invaluable in both the selection and deployment processes, demonstrating a deep understanding of the College's sector-specific needs.

Object First's Ootbi (Out-of-the-Box Immutability) solution impressed Newnham College right from the start. Its simplicity, easy integration with Veeam, strong focus on ransomware protection, and predictable pricing model were standout features for the College. Woollard notes that another benefit was the smooth deployment process, undertaken in collaboration with DMS:

"Object First's intuitive interface allowed us to get the system operational in a fraction of the time anticipated. Their support team was highly responsive, ensuring that any configuration nuances were addressed promptly. The guided installation and ongoing training provided by their team were standout aspects of the experience."

The Results

By implementing Ootbi from Object First, Newnham College was able to address all its key storage challenges:

- Immutable storage ensures backups remain protected from tampering or deletion, providing the College a strong safeguard against ransomware threats.

- Robust security and seamless integration with existing Veeam architecture allows the College to respond effectively when incidents arise.

- Data management processes are streamlined, freeing up IT staff to focus on strategic initiatives rather than routine backup maintenance.

All this has had a significant effect on the College as a whole. According to Woollard, **"Object First has greatly bolstered our confidence in the reliability and security of our backup solution."**

Conclusion

A combination of the right technology and the right support proved critical to Newnham College as it looks to prepare its backup storage environment not just for the needs of today but those of the future, too.

Ben Prendergast, Prinicpal Consultant at DMS, notes: **"The solution provides peace of mind against ransomware threats and has streamlined Newnham's backup processes. The college now benefits from faster backup and recovery times, improved scalability, and a more robust long-term storage strategy."**

According to Newnham College, Object First will continue to play a critical role in its IT strategy, particularly as it looks to scale its storage requirements and enhance disaster recovery capabilities.

Woollard summarises: **"Object First's commitment to innovation and customer support gives us confidence in their ability to meet our evolving needs, ensuring the resilience of our IT infrastructure for years to come."**