

Implementing a comprehensive Business Continuity solution for Yorkshire Building Society



Yorkshire Building Society turns to Kavanagh for the execution of a major programme of infrastructure upgrades to enhance business continuity.

As one of the UK's largest and most successful building societies, Yorkshire Building Society places great importance on maintaining high levels of service to its two million plus members. With business growing and extending into new areas, the Yorkshire decided to embark upon an extensive upgrade of its IT systems to improve service levels and speed of recovery from loss of systems.

"Kavanagh's ability to successfully manage the many teams involved and get people to work together effectively on this wide ranging programme was impressive."

PHIL COTTAM, HEAD OF SERVICES AND STRATEGY FOR YORKSHIRE BUILDING SOCIETY

Phil Cottam, Head of Services and Strategy for the Society engaged Kavanagh to help prepare for this substantial undertaking. The services provided by Kavanagh included an assessment of the existing IT environment and the development of proposals for new systems and processes to meet higher standards of Disaster Recovery (DR). It was intended to meet the additional objectives of upgrading ageing systems, improving flexibility and reducing energy consumption. Kavanagh provided a full cost analysis of the proposed solutions.

When the time came to implement the new infrastructure, Phil again chose Kavanagh to manage the programme and provide implementation services, explaining: "Faced with our biggest technology refresh exercise since the mainframe days of the 1990s, we needed an IT partner with proven capability. Kavanagh had demonstrated exceptional technical expertise and took the trouble to understand our environment and business needs thoroughly."

Implementing a comprehensive Business Continuity Programme Yorkshire Building Society



CAREFUL PLANNING

The scope of the programme was broad and encompassed three main streams; preparation of premises, implementation of IT systems and establishment of new business continuity facilities. The programme involved coordination between many disparate projects, plus managing resources from Kavanagh, the Society and a number of third parties, making careful planning crucial.

The programme manager appointed by Kavanagh used a structured methodology designed to ensure predictable delivery of the many projects involved, and to control costs. A programme office was set up to oversee requirement definition, planning, communication with all parties, budgeting, change management and risk management, plus overall project management.

A key feature of Kavanagh's approach was the creation of clear documentation of all objectives, reporting structures and responsibilities, together with a detailed Benefits Realisation Document. This specified all the solutions to be delivered and quantified the resulting business benefits. "Kavanagh gave us a clear picture of the programme and deliverables at the outset, which was invaluable for inspiring confidence in a successful outcome," says Phil.

BUILDING THE SOLUTION

The responsibilities assigned to Kavanagh were overall programme management. This included keeping a steering group of senior management fully briefed on issues and progress, plus technical leadership of the design and implementation processes and management of individual projects.

The range of technologies involved included servers, centralised storage, networks, middleware and applications, plus greater use of virtualisation. In addition to procurement and installation of technology components, Kavanagh's activities also included systems integration, migration of applications, rigorous testing and training of operational staff.

A major element of the programme was the establishment of a new DR facility that could take over critical services in the event of a major disaster, such as a fire. This environment was designed to provide alternative office space for staff and IT systems that could be deployed rapidly with minimal loss of data. Setting up this facility entailed not only implementing back-up IT systems, but also installing generators, cooling systems, heating and lighting.

"Kavanagh's considerable experience of executing major IT projects was evident in the professional and structured approach of its team," reports Phil. "Their emphasis on clear communication and building good working relationships with all the parties involved was a key factor in the success of the undertaking."

Business Continuity solution for



THE BENEFITS

The stringent targets for the restoration of key systems and data in the event of a major incident have been achieved. Being able to achieve these targets is particularly important for users of the Society's interactive web site, which allows customers to manage their savings 24 x 7.

In addition to responding faster to complete system loss, YBS's upgraded infrastructure has improved general reliability and resilience to individual component failure. Modern servers and centralised storage technology from HP have built in fault tolerance and virtualisation allows fast redeployment of applications in the event of system failure.

"A key benefit delivered by our new virtualised systems is greatly improved ease of management," says Phil. "The same number of technical staff can now manage more systems and additional servers or more storage capacity can be added quickly."

"We are confident that our upgraded technology has the potential to substantially lower the demand for power and cooling through better hardware utilisation and more efficient devices."

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THE FUTURE

Although a prime objective of the programme was to achieve higher levels of business continuity, Kavanagh and Yorkshire Building Society worked together to go further and ensure that the resulting IT infrastructure would provide an agile, efficient and scalable platform for the future.

As any poor performing system can compromise the overall integrity of the environment, Kavanagh used its proven IT Maturity Methodology to assess all systems in depth. This process identified shortfalls and helped achieve consistent capability levels for performance, resilience, flexibility and manageability across the entire environment.

Another long-term consideration for the Society's management is the need to reduce energy costs and carbon footprint. "We are confident that our upgraded technology has the potential to substantially lower the demand for power and cooling through better hardware utilisation and more efficient devices," says Phil. "To verify that the expected savings are being achieved, we have put automated monitoring of energy usage in place with help from Kavanagh."

Challenge

- ◆ Plan and implement a major upgrade of IT and facilities
- ◆ Raise business continuity capability to meet defined targets
- ◆ Establish a flexible and manageable architecture for the future
- ◆ Reduce energy consumption
- ◆ Provide competitive pricing

Solution

- ◆ Extensive IT infrastructure upgrade
- ◆ New DR facility built
- ◆ Programme planning and management
- ◆ Full implementation services

Results

- ◆ Successful implementation, on time and within budget
- ◆ Business continuity targets achieved
- ◆ Modern flexible architecture in place
- ◆ Energy efficiency improved
- ◆ Value for money delivered

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Technology highlights

Hardware

- ◆ HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays
- ◆ HP Integrity Blades
- ◆ HP ProLiant Blades
- ◆ HP c-Class Blade enclosures
- ◆ HP Virtual Connect Fabric Modules
- ◆ Cisco MDS SAN Director Switches
- ◆ HP StorageWorks XP Disk Array upgrade
- ◆ HP StorageWorks MSL Tape Library upgrade

Software

- ◆ HP-UX
- ◆ HP Integrity VM
- ◆ VMware ESX, SRM
- ◆ Redhat Enterprise Linux

Services

- ◆ Programme and project management
- ◆ Architecture and design
- ◆ Business continuity management
- ◆ Installation, integration and testing
- ◆ Training

Why Kavanagh?

- ◆ Demonstrated understanding of the business requirements
- ◆ Expert in the design and supply of IT infrastructure
- ◆ Expert in implementation and transition services
- ◆ Expert in programme and project management
- ◆ Complete customer focus
- ◆ Expert in HP solutions
- ◆ Excellent account management

Customer at a glance

- ◆ Yorkshire Building Society
- ◆ Major UK financial institution
- ◆ 24 x 7 online services
- ◆ Growing business
- ◆ www.ybs.co.uk

For further information on how working with Kavanagh can benefit you please call 01344 409800 or visit www.kavanagh.co.uk

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