

CASE STUDY >

EDUCATION: Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics

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STORServer Backup Appliance eliminates tape monster that was preparing to swallow Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics' server room

Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics (OSSM) is a two-year public residential high school created and funded by the Oklahoma legislature. The school is open to all students across the state who wish to apply during their sophomore year.

The Challenge:

Dillard wears a number of other hats including chief information officer, tech support, help desk, network administrator, configuration manager and inventory control officer. It seems anything with an on/off switch is his responsibility, which includes the important task of campus-wide data backups and restores. In 2005, Dillard was frustrated with the existing cumbersome backup solution.

The Solution:

While doing his due diligence, Dillard looked online for "the best backup system in the world." IBM Tivoli Storage Manager repeatedly showed up in his search results, but Dillard felt the system was too complex and cumbersome.

STORServer, Inc. built on IBM® Tivoli® Storage Manager, offers a complete suite of enterprise backup appliances, software and services that solve today's backup, archive and disaster recovery challenges. Dillard found STORServer offered a small backup appliance perfect for OSSM's environment and expandable to meet the school's growing needs. What appealed most to him was he did not need in-depth knowledge of TSM to operate the STORServer Backup Appliance. Shortly thereafter, the solution was installed at OSSM with the help of STORServer reseller Dataedge Solutions, based out of Olathe, Kan. STORServer sells exclusively through a reseller channel.

"STORServer makes TSM very easy and meets my needs perfectly," said Dillard. "I see it once a day and that's it. If for any reason I don't see it on a given day, the system takes care of itself. I can come back in and recover my off-sites, do tape swaps and perform backups like I was there. I'm a busy guy and need a backup system that allows me to be as hands off as possible. Simplicity of operation has turned out to be the best feature of the STORServer Backup Appliance."

Results:

The appliance is so simple to use that Dillard operated it for five years without any formal training. A few years ago, he decided to go through STORServer's training, but feels the system is straightforward enough that anyone can use it.

Crucial for Dillard (and every other IT professional who oversees backups) is the importance of having a system that allows lost files to be located within minutes. With STORServer's online system, Dillard does not have to track down a bunch of tapes in the event something needs recovered. He asks a student or faculty member for the file name, where it was located and a few other simple questions, and can get it back during a quick phone call. The STORServer Backup Appliance "makes life around the school better for everyone," said Dillard.

OSSM's registrar can attest to that. After completing the list of information for the incoming year's student candidates—a process that took months—the registrar went to save the document but it was nowhere to be found. She urgently called Dillard and said the file may have been accidentally deleted. Dillard was able to ask her a few quick questions over the phone and within minutes, locate the file and restore it—much to the registrar's relief.

In addition to "saving the day," Dillard has saved a lot of time since the days of using OSSM's former backup solution. With STORServer, he rotates tapes and does hands-on work with the system in a process that takes just 10 minutes each day. Marking, labeling, pulling and finding the right tapes with the previous system used to take an hour on its own. Although the number of students and faculty members, as well as the amount of data, has grown since 2005, Dillard still has managed to dramatically cut down the time spent on backups over the years.

**ABOUT STORSERVER**

STORServer, Inc., headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO is a leading provider of data backup solutions for the mid-market. We offer a complete suite of appliances, software, and services that solve today's backup, archive and disaster recovery challenges. For more information on STORServer, please visit the company's website at www.storserver.com.

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