

Executive Summary

Customer name: Deakin University

Industry: Education

Location: Melbourne and
Geelong, Victoria

Number of students: 32,000

Technology Challenge:

- Rapid depletion of data storage space due to extreme information growth
- Critical requirement for secure storage and back-up replication of critical services
- Immediate demand for new smarter storage system that is easy to manage and simple to grow

Storage Solution:

- IBM XIV® Storage System
- Deployment services from Southern Cross

Customer Benefits:

- Increased data storage capacity from 100 TB to 200 TB, with headroom for a further 120 TB
- Zero downtime migration for 200 applications and 80 TB of storage
- Increased DR backup capacity from 10% to 90% of applications
- 20% increase in storage array performance

Deakin University works with Southern Cross and IBM for next-generation storage solution

Technology Challenge

Deakin is one of Australia's largest universities, with more than 32,000 students with campuses in Melbourne, Geelong and Warrnambool. Established in the 1970s as one of the new generation of Australian universities, Deakin University combines a university's traditional focus on teaching and research with a desire to seek new ways of developing and delivering courses.

The university had recently been recording double-digit percentage information growth, making the management of storage an ongoing concern. Deakin's existing storage infrastructure was the IBM DS8000 Series, but deciding it would be too costly to continually upgrade the existing system, the university opted to issue a tender for a storage replacement strategy.

"Southern Cross has been a trusted partner of Deakin for some time... the IBM XIV Storage System itself is a great fit for Deakin because it's so simple to implement and configure, and yet still performs like an enterprise level solution... this is an example of the hype absolutely matching the reality."

Craig Warren, Infrastructure Manager, Deakin University

Deakin has a technology refresh strategy every four years for servers and storage. As Craig Warren, Infrastructure Manager with Deakin University explains, "There's a story about a pilgrim who visits a monk in a monastery at the top of a mountain. Every day the monk pulls a basket of goods on a rope up the hill to the monastery. Upon enquiring how often he replaces the rope, the monk explains to the pilgrim – 'every time it breaks.'

"Well, technology of course becomes obsolete at some point, so our four year storage replacement strategy is about being proactive, before the rope breaks."

The university also needed to ensure the storage and back-up replication of critical services such as its Learning Management System and Student Management System, both among Deakin's busiest applications which respectively house all course curriculums and student records, and are accessed between 20,000 and 30,000 times every day.

Overall, Deakin was looking for a new storage system that would be simple to run, easily facilitate growth, and include all the management tools upfront without hidden software or maintenance costs.

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Storage Solution

The tender process for Deakin's new storage solution saw many of major storage vendors submit solutions for consideration, leading to a shortlist of three. Following the evaluation period, Deakin University selected the next-generation IBM XIV® Storage System – the world's first single architecture grid based storage system – deployed by Southern Cross Computer Systems.

Craig Warren from Deakin explains, "Southern Cross has been a trusted partner of Deakin for some time, providing the technologies for our desktop and server environments. The IBM storage experts – who themselves are extremely competent and a great resource – couldn't recommend Southern Cross highly enough.

"The IBM XIV Storage System itself is a great fit for Deakin because it's so simple to implement and configure, and yet still performs like an enterprise level solution. Our technology guys are ecstatic about it."

Deakin purchased four individual IBM XIV Storage System arrays, split evenly between its main sites at Geelong and its replication site at Burwood. Southern Cross also provided consulting services and assisted with the storage implementation.

Customer Benefits

Deakin University has enjoyed a wide range of benefits since deploying the IBM XIV Storage System. Chiefly, Deakin has progressed from a previous maximum of 100 terabytes of data storage to a system that can house 200 terabytes, with headroom for a further 120 terabytes.

Meeting the important criteria defined by Deakin, the solution implemented by Southern Cross proved to be easy to manage and simple to migrate – this meant zero downtime as more than 200 applications and 80 terabytes of storage were migrated in one weekend.

As well as gaining twice the storage capacity, Deakin can enjoy a much faster recovery time in the event of a disaster. Previously, its disaster recovery system could only handle 10% of the university's applications – now that figure is 90%.

Deakin has recorded an approximate 20% increase in storage array performance, a benefit illustrated by the university's payroll application.

As Craig Warren from Deakin concludes, "The simplicity of the IBM XIV Storage System is very smart. For example, some 20-step management tasks are now achieved in just two steps. This is an example of the hype absolutely matching the reality, and for us here at Deakin, it is terrific to not have to worry about storage for another four years."