

POLICE FORCE BOOSTS ACCESS TO OPERATIONAL DATA



New storage infrastructure enables Lancashire Constabulary to increase availability of applications and meet national policing obligations

INDUSTRY

Regional police force

ORGANISATION SIZE

The constabulary employs around 5,500 people

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Ensure police officers have fast and reliable access to operational data

SOLUTION

Deploy a flexible storage solution that can scale to cope with the future needs of the force

RESULTS

- Improved availability for police applications
- Enhanced ability to meet MoPI and ANPR obligations

- Simplified IT management

INTEREST AREAS

- Data storage
- Disaster recovery
- Management of Police Information
- Automatic Number Plate Recognition

KEY SERVICES

- Planning and design
- Project management
- Technical consultancy
- Implementation
- Supply chain services

CORE TECHNOLOGIES

- EMC Clariion storage area network
- EMC Celerra network attached storage
- HP servers

“The new storage infrastructure has improved access to policing data, which is vital for the force’s operational efficiency and tackling crime.”

“Computacenter has brought real innovation to our storage strategy and has helped us maximise our investment in new technology.”

Keop Simcox, ICT Operations
Manager, Lancashire
Constabulary

Customer overview

Lancashire Constabulary is responsible for policing an area of 2,000 square miles, which includes 256 miles of motorway, 124 miles of coastline, as well as major towns, such as Blackpool, Morecambe, Preston and Burnley. Its 3,500 police officers are dedicated to tackling crime and reassuring communities.

Business need

In a typical day, the force receives more than 4,300 calls, makes 185 arrests, solves 124 crimes and responds to 2,111 incidents. All these activities require access to a range of information – from vehicle registrations and previous convictions to missing persons and crime intelligence.

This information is stored across a range of applications – the most important and complex of which is Sleuth: a bespoke set of integrated databases that provide police officers with vital operational data.

Ensuring the integrity and availability of all this data is absolutely crucial to the efficiency of the force, as Kep Simcox, ICT Operations Manager for Lancashire Constabulary, explains: "Information is the lifeblood of community policing. Providing our officers and support staff with excellent access to data and applications can make all the difference to our efforts to solve and prevent crime."

With national initiatives, such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition leading to an ever-increasing need for more data storage, the Constabulary needed to develop a flexible and scalable storage strategy. "Our existing approach to storage didn't deliver the necessary resilience," comments Kep. "If a server failed, then we could lose an application for as long as a week. We needed to improve data availability and security, and increase our storage capacity to cope with current and future policing developments."

Solution

As a result, Lancashire Constabulary decided to replace its existing direct attached storage disks with a series of flexible storage area networks (SAN). To help deploy this new infrastructure, the force turned to Computacenter.

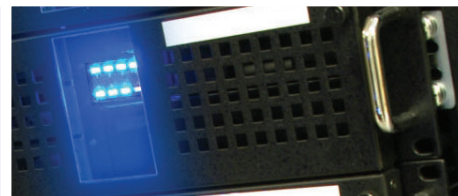
How Computacenter helped

The force's first SAN was implemented to support its combined case preparation and custody system, which contains vital information to help police officers decide whether individuals should be granted bail. To safeguard the availability of the application and provide disaster recovery capabilities, the SAN is underpinned by a highly resilient HP server cluster.

Since the success of this first roll-out, Lancashire Constabulary has gone on to migrate several more of its core applications to a SAN environment. This includes its duty management solution, human resources applications, Sleuth and the national police system HOLMES2. "These are mission-critical applications and they need high availability and excellent storage capabilities," adds Kep.

To ensure the constabulary's storage infrastructure can meet these requirements – and the demands of Management of Police Information (MoPI), which regulates the sharing and retention of data across the country's police forces – Computacenter has deployed a highly scalable solution. As Jon Lewis, a Storage Technical Architect for Computacenter, explains: "By combining new technologies with best practice, we have developed a solution that can be easily expanded to cope with the force's future needs. It also provides a centralised point of management, which makes the infrastructure easier to support."

As well as helping to design the new solution, Computacenter also sourced the EMC hardware through Catalist (the



government's IT procurement catalogue) and continues to provide technical advice on the force's future storage strategy. Lancashire Constabulary is also using EMC network attached storage (NAS) to provide users with reliable file serving, and has equipped each of its six divisional offices with a dedicated two-terabyte SAN.

Results

These divisional SANs are essential for enabling the force to meet the nationwide plans for ANPR. As Kep explains: "We have 100 CCTV cameras across the county. Each time a car goes past, we add 25kb of data to our systems – and with some cameras reading one number plate every second, that soon adds up. The new solution is highly flexible and will enable us to keep pace with the storage demands of ANPR."

The SANs and clustered servers have also improved the availability of core policing applications. "We can now respond to any server outages within a matter of seconds by switching to the failover device," says Kep. "As a result, police officers can now access operational data 24x7, which means they are better equipped to solve and prevent crime."

The infrastructure will also help to provide the force with the foundations it needs for email archiving and document management. "We now have a cost-effective and reliable storage environment that will support the needs of the force for years to come," adds Kep.

More resources

- For more information on our storage services, log on to www.computacenter.com/technology-solutions
- View more case studies, at www.computacenter.com/case-study