



Success Story

Totton College Works With NetApp to Enhance its IT Infrastructure Using FlexPod Express



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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Industry
Education

The Challenge

Today's students depend on and expect excellent IT facilities. The quality of the IT infrastructure on offer is a key factor in encouraging a student to choose a college. The leadership team at Totton therefore recently embarked on an investment programme to further enhance the college's information technology infrastructure.

The Solution

FlexPod Express, a family of prevalidated architectures based on computing and networking from Cisco and storage from NetApp was designed to meet the budget and the performance required by small and midsized businesses.

Benefits

- High performing and easy to manage
- Provides platform for business growth
- Instills confidence

Customer Profile

Totton College is a further education provider based near Southampton, Hampshire, UK, that offers a wide range of courses for students aged 16 and upwards. The college offers inspirational and innovative learning experiences for everyone to get the very best from their time studying at Totton. It is important that all students are presented with learning opportunities that are responsive and innovative. To continue to attract students, the college has to invest in all aspects of its facilities and infrastructure.

The Challenge

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In early 2014, Totton College's IT department recognised that they needed to upgrade their systems to provide increased work space for staff and students and to find a solution for their growing data storage headache. The IT team set out to find the right

product at a reasonable cost. The team understood that they needed to implement changes swiftly and with a minimum of disruption because continuous service is vital for the students' and teachers' day-to-day activities.

Leading the team was Matt Ffolliott-Powell, the experienced IT manager of the college who worked in a number of education establishments as well as in the commercial sector and at some of the largest IT providers. Matt sums up the challenge: "The college had the budget to invest in the best IT systems, but, as a publicly funded body, we have a duty to get the best value for money we can. We therefore needed a system which was fit for purpose but which would meet the tight budget constraints that any college or school faces today."

The Solution

Matt and his team set out to evaluate solutions from a range of leading IT vendors. With increased interest in the education sector, the competition to win the contract was fierce, and each of the resellers and hardware and storage providers was keen to prove it had the best offering. Following extensive assessment, including visits to the vendors' demonstration labs, Matt and his team chose the NetApp

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Matt ffolliott-Powell
Team Leader

FlexPod® Express solution proposed .

Matt said, “Of course, value for money was a key metric in choosing the solution proposed by CSPI, but for us a winning feature of the CSPI proposal was the fact that we could benefit from hardware and software from two of the world’s leading IT suppliers at a price point we could afford. That, combined with the confidence we had in the professional services from CSPI, swung things in their favour.”

FlexPod Express

FlexPod Express, the solution chosen by Matt and his team, is a family of prevalidated architectures based on computing and networking from Cisco and storage from NetApp. It was designed to meet the budget and the performance required by small and mid-sized businesses.

Matt and his team chose VMware® as the virtualisation software, but FlexPod Express can also support Hyper-V® from Microsoft. The advantage of FlexPod Express is that the total solution was prevalidated by the manufacturers. There is none of the doubt associated with buying a range of components from different vendors and then hoping that they all work together. FlexPod Express lets you buy a single storage and virtualisation platform and still benefit from components that are best in class.

Moreover, because the solution is prevalidated, the design, selection, and configuration phases are reduced which means that the system can be up and running quicker than traditional storage solutions. A final but important benefit is that there is one point of contact for support for all components.

Business Benefits

CSPI worked with Matt and his people to choose the specific elements of the FlexPod Express solution that meet the requirements of the college. CSPI then took ownership of prebuilding the appliance before taking it to the site and installing it. This saved crucial on-site time, a critical factor because the system had to be up and running before the students and staff arrived back on site at the beginning of term.

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Matt ffolliott-Powell
Team Leader

Growing with the Business

The FlexPod Express installed was designed to grow as the organisation grows; it was designed to support the staff and student body for a number of years. However, with the increasing workload demands and the changing nature of the documents and files used by students, the rate of growth required for data storage is also increasing. NetApp provides a number of solutions to maximise data usage and this will help Totton meet its workload demands without adding more hardware. However, when the time comes, the FlexPod Express system can be expanded easily to accommodate the extra capacity required.

As Matt says, “Demands on IT in education can only increase. We are already seeing the need to respond to such trends as Bring Your Own Device, increases in data demands, and the need to provide IT access anytime, anywhere, and anyplace. We believe we have chosen the right platform in FlexPod Express and the right partner to allow us to respond to these challenges. There is no doubt that we will be busy in the coming years, and we hope to continue to work with CSPI as we respond to the changes ahead.”

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NetApp Products

- FAS2220 storage systems with NetApp Data ONTAP® Essentials

Cisco Products

- 2 C220M3 servers
- 2 Nexus® 3048TP-1GE switches
- VMware Products
- VMware® vSphere® 5
- Backup products
- Veeam Essentials

Partner

CSPI

<http://www.cspi.com/uk/>



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