

# WHSmith News



## WHSmith News Transitions to EMC Information Lifecycle Management Strategy

### SOLUTION SNAPSHOT

WHSmith News has deployed a tiered storage infrastructure using EMC SAN and NAS systems along with EMC software to manage the environment, backup data and provide business continuity as part of an information lifecycle management (ILM) strategy.

- **Primary applications:**

SAP, Oracle Database 10g, Quality Assurance, testing and development tools, and e-mail system

- **EMC Software:**

EMC ControlCenter, EMC SRDF, EMC SANCopy, EMC Legato NetWorker

- **Storage Infrastructure:**

EMC networked storage utilising EMC Symmetrix DMX 2000, EMC CLARiiON CX700 and EMC NS700g

- **Services:**

Capgemini and EMC Consulting

### BUSINESS VALUE HIGHLIGHTS

**Profile:** WHSmith News is the UK's leading newspaper and magazine wholesaler, serving 22,000 retailers in England and Wales. The company handles over 50 million newspapers and magazines every week to outlets ranging from corner shops and convenience stores to supermarkets and garage forecourts.

**Challenge:** WHSmith News wanted to exploit its information assets more effectively. It decided to move to a new IT infrastructure but demanded a minimal risk to ongoing business. It needed a foundation solution that would enhance the way it managed information, while reducing IT costs.

**Business Value:** WHSmith News is using EMC networked storage systems and EMC software to deliver the following benefits:

- Reduce information management costs by 50 per cent
- Manage over 101,000 SAP transactions an hour
- Cut backup times from 13 to just 6 hours
- Return on investment (ROI) expected in 3 years – 1 year earlier than planned
- Complete lifecycle of information in 1 day – with the backup of 21 terabytes of data from disk to tape for long-term, offsite storage every day
- Better management of the company's SAP and Oracle environments

As a result of increasing competition in the publishing and retailing industries, information assets, IT systems and processes are now critical factors in providing a competitive advantage. WHSmith News' current IT infrastructure would not support the business to the level required in the future due to the expected growth and demand for information. To solve its information management challenges, the company initiated a project to exploit information more effectively as part of a £3.5 million IT transformation.

The company demanded an environment that would improve information management, reduce costs, and increase information availability and performance. WHSmith News also wanted to ensure that any transition to a new IT infrastructure would be executed with minimal risk to its business.



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—Robert Wilson, Chief Technology Officer, WHSmith News

Working with WHSmith News' IT partner, Capgemini, it reviewed the major information storage and management suppliers. Following the review by Capgemini and verification by The Meta Group (now part of Gartner), EMC was selected to implement a new IT infrastructure. EMC was seen as a trusted information management vendor with the experience, solutions and proven track record of helping customers move to new IT environments and strategies.

Robert Wilson, chief technology officer, WHSmith News, said, “We initially wanted to manage our information more effectively, but we soon realised we could reduce costs if we managed our information according to its changing value. As such, information lifecycle management (ILM) became a critical element of the selection process. After an extensive and independent analysis, we determined that EMC was the only supplier capable of offering a complete systems, software and services solution for ILM.”

### Moving to ILM

Not satisfied with an upgrade, WHSmith News wanted to implement a world class IT infrastructure that directly translated into tangible business benefits. EMC outlined a project, which involved moving to a tiered storage environment and mapping information and applications to the most appropriate systems. Because WHSmith News wanted to move data from disk-based systems to tape for long-term storage every day, the new infrastructure was required to automate data movement and backup to support the company's information management process.

EMC presented a 3 tier storage environment to WHSmith News consisting of high performing systems for business applications including SAP and Oracle; mid-tier systems and network attached storage (NAS) for managing quality assurance and the testing and development environment; and an ATA-based system for continuous, 24x7 archiving.

Along with the tiered storage environment that would reduce costs by storing information on the most cost effective system, EMC presented EMC OpenScale for 'pay-as-you-go' billing of storage resources. EMC OpenScale provides WHSmith News with capacity built into its systems that can be utilised on demand at a fixed price. This helps the company manage its costs more effectively while ensuring information availability to the business.

“The combination of tiered storage and on-demand capacity with EMC OpenScale was a very compelling solution. Having additional capacity at a fixed price in our systems that we can turn on when required means we are a more flexible and cost efficient service to the business. We can now manage our costs much more effectively with EMC,” said Wilson.

### Software brings ILM to life

To manage the tiered environment, WHSmith News is using EMC software. EMC ControlCenter is used to manage the whole environment providing the IT department with the tools to optimise it to best suit the business. WHSmith News hosts its SAP and Oracle databases on separate EMC Symmetrix DMX 2000 systems to ensure business continuity and replicates data between the two arrays using EMC SRDF data replication software.



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—Robert Wilson, Chief Technology Officer, WHSmith News

WHSmith News completes a full backup of its data every day, which amounts to 21 terabytes. Rather than storing 21 terabytes of data each day on disk-based systems for long term storage, it is moved to tape and sent off-site for more cost effective long-term storage. EMC Legato NetWorker is used to manage the backup process, which involves the movement of information through EMC systems to tape.

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### Benefits of ILM

EMC was challenged with moving WHSmith News to a new IT infrastructure with minimal risk to the business, and reduce storage costs. EMC has met those objectives and delivered more.

The existing storage environment was struggling to cope with the volume of data feeding its SAP application. The deployment of EMC Symmetrix DMX will dramatically improve the performance of SAP, ensure there are no bottlenecks and manage 101,000 transactions an hour. EMC Legato NetWorker has concurrently improved business application performance by reducing backup from 13 to just 6 hours.

The new infrastructure has become a benchmark within WHSmith Group and Wilson reports that it will use EMC Consulting to provide strategic advice about the IT infrastructures in other parts of the company. According to Wilson, EMC Consulting was outstanding in its handling of the WHSmith News project and was better than many professional services teams he had experienced during his career.

“EMC exceeded our expectations in the delivery of an ILM strategy. We have seen our storage costs reduce by 50 per cent from deployment of systems and software that meet our exact requirements. Furthermore, we had planned for a 4-year ROI but EMC will deliver a year earlier than planned. The portfolio of solutions now available from EMC means we can develop, enhance and evolve our environment to exploiting our information fully. WHSmith News has embraced ILM with EMC and we are seeing significant benefits as a result,” concluded Wilson.



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Produced in the UK.