PDSA ensures complete control of O365 data

No risk of reliance on single provider

Eliminating the need for capital expenditure

The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals is the UK's leading vet charity. Operating through a UK-wide network of 48 Pet Hospitals, the PDSA provides low cost and free veterinary care to the sick and injured pets of people in need and promotes responsible pet ownership.

Having true cloud-to-cloud protection for Office 365 was a crucial requirement when the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals started transitioning their core infrastructure to the cloud.

The last thing the PDSA wanted to do was splash out for additional on-premise hardware to back up O365 data - at the very time their staff of more than 2,000 were moving steadily towards storing data in the cloud rather than onsite.

Underpinning the PDSA's forward-thinking IT strategy was a desire to make the most of OneDrive, O365's cloud file-storage service.

There was no question, though, of the PDSA assuming that data stored within O365 would automatically be protected against loss or accidental deletion. Storing sensitive data with a single provider, even one of Microsoft's size, was

a risk they were not prepared to take. The charity also wanted to define specific O365 retention periods to ensure they were adequately protected and that the PDSA was meeting its legal obligations. Utilising Redstor, the PDSA ensure that all live O365 data can also be accessed from Redstor's cloud in the event of an emergency, thereby retaining full control over the accessibility and protection of their data.

In the event of accidental deletion or a ransomware attack, staff can be sure of on-demand access to all 21TB of protected data - irrespective of whether it's stored onsite or in the cloud.

The PDSA currently have two data centres – one live at Fareham and one DR site at the head office in Telford - as well as a donation centre just outside Birmingham, a call centre in Sunderland, 48 pet hospitals and more than 120 shops.

By offering borderless visibility of local and online data, Redstor enables organisations to monitor usage at any time, on any device - and set policies across their entire estates.

This enables the charity to assign consistent protection policies across its entire data estate, as well as simplify and automate data management with one central, easy-to-use system.

Infrastructure manager Parmy Rayet said: "We have file servers, web servers, database servers - a lot we are potentially moving into the cloud.

"We decided to migrate a lot of users to O365 just before the summer of 2018. As we moved more and more people, we obviously needed to keep a backup of it all. Everyone at our head office is on OneDrive and our shop users are about to go on OneDrive."

By having a separate backup strategy that is in the cloud, PDSA have enjoyed significant savings.

"

We don't have to buy more physical hardware, look for another data centre or worry about the location of our data - and what we pay for Redstor is cheap compared to hardware and data centre costs."

Parmy Rayet, Infrastructure Manager at the PDSA

Challenges

- Avoid having all of the PDSA's Office 365 data stored with a single provider
- Managing and protecting data efficiently whether it's onsite or in the cloud
- Finding a solution that is quick to deploy, secure and easy to manage
- The need to avoid splashing out on expensive new infrastructure
- Addressing increasing regulation and compliance issues

Solution

- Adopt a separate backup strategy for Office 365 data to retain full control
- Borderless visibility of entire, complex data estate at any time, on any device through a centralised management console
- Intelligent, secure, policy-driven automation and sophisticated reporting that can be set up within 15 minutes
- True cloud-to-cloud protection - with no need for capital expenditure
- A data management solution that delivers global search as well as reliable backup and recovery, archiving and disaster recovery

Key Benefits

- Instant access to Office 365 data in the event of accidental deletion or a ransomware attack
- A consistent data protection policy across whole estate, viewing cloud and onsite data in one place
- Quick and easy centralised management of data in Office 365 without circumventing O365 security and auditing
- Capability to auto-scale protection as demand changes
- Address e-discovery requirements and comply with General Data Protection Regulation by searching and actioning all data wherever it resides

Benefit of viewing cloud and onsite data in one place

Separate backup strategy

The PDSA initially deployed Redstor to back up data on their server environment.

Parmy said: "We liked that Redstor provided cloud-based backups. It was easy to access, easy to set up and the support wraparound was really good. It was competitively priced and a really good alternative to buying another SAN or data centre to accommodate all our backups.

"All our live critical servers are on Redstor, and any new server that is created."

The PDSA insist on having a separate backup policy for O365 as a security standard.

Parmy said: "Some of the data we have is very sensitive. Data retention is high too. We need to make sure everything is available if someone leaves, even if we need to go back years to get it.
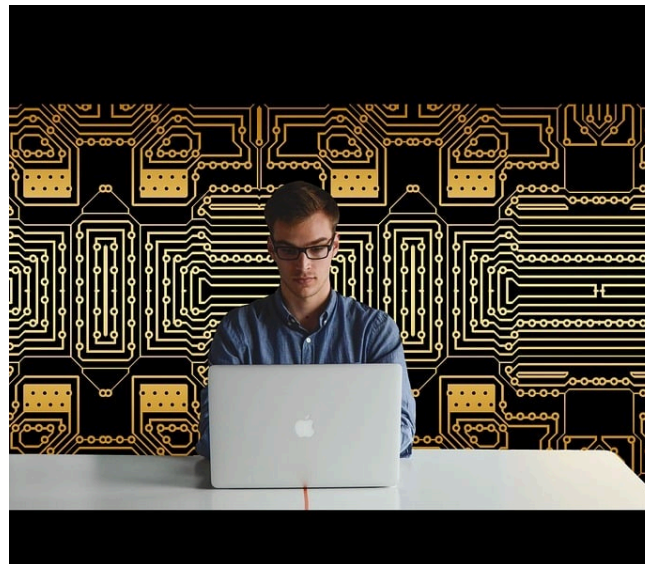
"With Redstor we can keep data as long as we like."

Single, web-based control centre

The PDSA's protected data has grown from 3TB to 21TB in two years, after rolling out the service to protect more of the organisation's IT estate. Parmy has welcomed the benefits of intelligent, policy-driven automation, powerful monitoring and sophisticated reporting via a single control centre.

Deployed and configured in 15 minutes, Redstor took the pain and expense out of implementing a data management solution.

Parmy said: "Redstor were fantastic helping my infrastructure team set up. They set up a couple of demo sites and demo users, talked us through it in a few Skype and Webex meetings, and my guys migrated the rest. The technical support you get from Redstor is exceptional."

How desirable would it be to have genuine insight providing visibility of hybrid multi-cloud environments?

- Very useful
- Quite useful
- Not especially important

SEE RESULTS
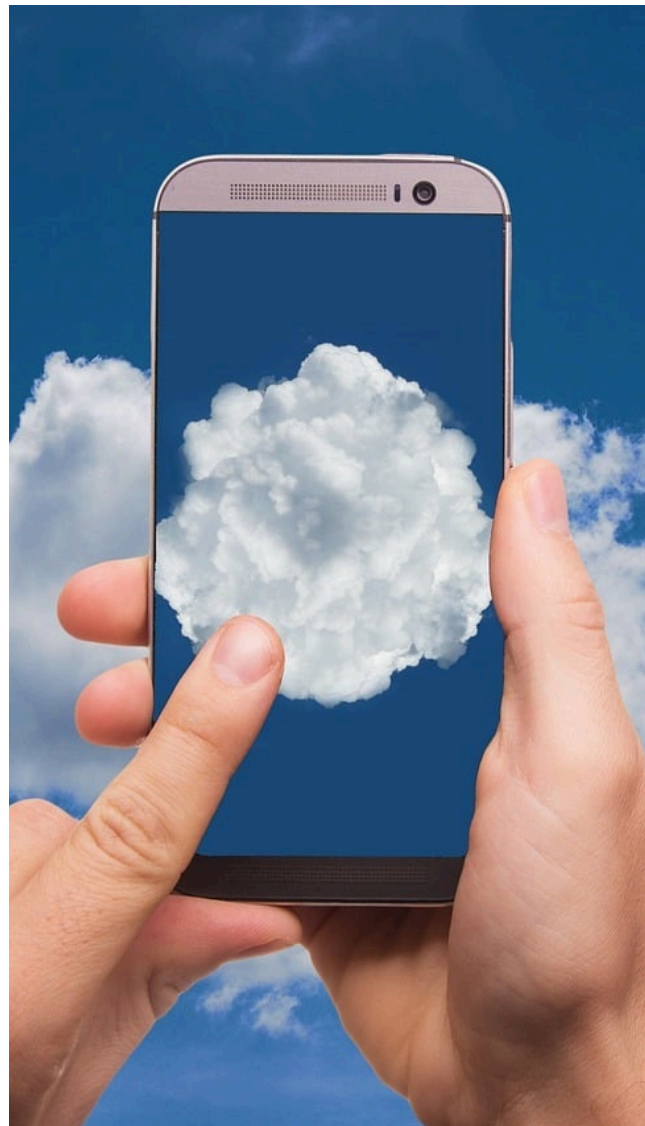
Supports explosion of new apps

Traditional backups are not only costly, complicated and time-consuming, they cannot scale to support the explosion in new apps and growing data sets.

With Redstor, there is no slowdown in PDSA's acceleration to the cloud or plans to adopt more SaaS services.

Parmy said: "The main end game is to move our core infrastructure to the cloud. Everyone at our head office is on OneDrive and eventually all our shop and hospital staff will be too. That's about 2,500 people in the UK.

"There are a lot of in-house projects going on so a lot of stuff will continue moving into the cloud.

"Our servers are set to back up incrementally every night – and the same with our OneDrive users. We get an email in the mornings saying it's all backed up. Very rarely do we need to pull a backup down, but we know that if we need to, it's there. Redstor give us that peace of mind."

If you were satisfied with the protection, security and location optimisation of the data services you were being offered, what would be the next most important criteria for selecting a provider for hybrid/multi-cloud environments?

○ Vendor reputation?

○ Breadth of services?

○ Compliance services?

○ Integration and orchestration?

○ Quality of support?

○ Pricing flexibility?

SEE RESULTS

Data streamed on demand

Running on servers, laptops and workstations, with backup selections profiled from the management console, Redstor provides the PDSA with rapid and granular restores for Office 365 and SaaS applications.

Unique, user-driven streaming technology enables access to an Office 365 mailbox, OneDrive folder or Sharepoint file within seconds.

Parmy said: "We value being able to drill down to a specific file and recover it from a particular timestamp - and the fact that when you build brand new servers it's easy to set up the cloud backup client. The whole process is seamless with Redstor.

"If a file on a server has been deleted we get it quickly. If a server dies, we create a new VM and pull the data out of the Redstor backup."

By streaming data in real time to any device, ensuring it is always available instantly, Redstor has made downtime a thing of the past.

Addressing compliance

Organisations are under pressure to address e-discovery requirements and comply with General Data Protection Regulation by searching and actioning all data wherever it resides.

Backups stored with Redstor can be searched to ensure every reference to a data subject, including in O365, is found instantly - without circumventing Microsoft security and auditing.

"

Redstor has helped us with our GDPR obligations and I would definitely recommend it. The way data is moving around in the cloud and on physical tin, you need a backup offsite - and having it in the cloud with Redstor is invaluable."

Parmy Rayet, Infrastructure Manager at the PDSA

Thank you for reading

PDSA Case Study