The University of Reading Chooses Rubrik for Fast SQL Recovery and Integration with Nutanix AHV and Microsoft Azure

UNIVERSITY of READING

INDUSTRY
Education

RESULTS
- 90% faster restores for SQL (from days to seconds)
- 75% management time savings
- 60% data reduction

THE CHALLENGE
- Time-consuming tape-based legacy solution
- Slow data access and restores
- Unable to protect all applications

THE SOLUTION
- Policy-driven automation for management simplicity
- Google-like search for fast granular recoveries
- One software across physical and virtual applications, on-prem to Microsoft Azure

The University of Reading is one of the United Kingdom's leading research universities and has been in existence for more than 150 years. It ranked amongst the Top 200 universities in the world, according to the QS World University Rankings 2018. Located in Reading, Berkshire, the university has three major campuses in the UK, in addition to one in Malaysia.

Kevin Mortimer, Infrastructure Services Manager, manages a team of 23 people which supports over 18,000 students and 7,000 faculty. "IT underpins the entire teaching experience at the university, ranging from providing email accounts, storing data, and streaming lectures," said Mortimer. "As an IT department, we are 100% service-focused. We deliver services that cater to our users' needs. Rubrik enables us to accelerate the delivery of services to drive strategic business value."

FRUSTRATION WITH UNRELIABLE AND TIME-CONSUMING LEGACY SOLUTION
Prior to Rubrik, the IT team were limited by their tape-centric legacy solution. "Backups have to work—that's the entire point. If our backups are failing, we can't meet our user demands," said Mortimer. "On top of that, our previous solution was unable to protect our environment in a timely manner."

"One of our biggest frustrations was the length of time it took to locate data for a restore," said Mortimer. "We could not perform restores with any degree of reliability. Tapes were located onsite and offsite, which required a significant amount of time to manage. Our Microsoft Exchange environment, which is critical to our users, could not be adequately protected. On top of that, a full backup would take over a week to complete. The solution was becoming completely unmanageable."

SEAMLESS INTEGRATION WITH NUTANIX AHV AND MICROSOFT AZURE
During their evaluation, Mortimer and team considered a number of solutions but ultimately ended up with Rubrik. "Other vendors were either too complicated or wanted us to run a lot of hardware on premises. We needed a data management solution that would allow us to 'set it and forget it,'" said Mortimer.

"Our environment is 98% virtualized, running Microsoft Hyper-V, VMware and Nutanix AHV, and we utilize Nexenta as our primary storage," said Mortimer. "We're thrilled that Rubrik is able to support our Nutanix AHV infrastructure. Compared to other technologies, Rubrik and Nutanix have proven they can outperform — I can't think of a better fit."

"Rubrik has also allowed us to completely migrate off tape and archive to public cloud with Microsoft Azure," said Mortimer. "We've already leveraged Azure for significant cost savings, and the integration with cloud couldn't be easier — just assign an SLA and Rubrik takes care of the rest. As a public university, we are also subject to Freedom of Information requests. Rubrik makes it a simple process for us to retrieve any documents needed to respond to queries."

"As we operate on-premises and in the cloud, we are especially excited about the Polaris SaaS platform," added Mortimer. "Polaris will organize all our information to make it easily discoverable and usable in order to solve our organization's key challenges."

INSTANT RECOVERY AND MANAGEMENT SIMPLICITY FOR MICROSOFT SQL SERVER

"Our previous solution could only backup around 10% of our environment. With Rubrik, we're protecting 90% of our environment and will eventually capture everything," said Mortimer. "Previously, our DBAs were checking backup jobs daily, in addition to performing full backups and shipping logs offsite. With Rubrik's incremental-forever backups, we have considerably reduced our daily backup load," said Mortimer.

"Rubrik also blew us away when performing MS SQL restores. Some of our student data was corrupted, and it took a week to restore a 1.2TB database and pull out the required tables with our previous solution," said Mortimer. "With Rubrik, it only took 30 seconds to perform a search and retrieve that data. This sold our DBAs on the power of Rubrik to meet our data management needs. We can perform file-level restores with a few clicks and roll back our servers to any point in time."

Benefits include:

- **90% faster restores:** "MS SQL restores that previously took one week are done in 30 seconds with Rubrik."

- **75% management time savings:** "Previously, our team was spending four hours a day managing backups, which has now gone down to less than one hour. With Rubrik, we're protecting 80% more of our environment but spending significantly less time managing the solution, giving our team more time to focus on strategic work."

- **60% data reduction:** "Rubrik has maximized our storage efficiency, As a result, we've achieved 60% data reduction."

- **Policy-based management:** "Rubrik's automated SLA policy engine puts the solution head and shoulders above the rest. Our team loves no longer having to schedule jobs."

- **Global search for file-level restore:** "Rubrik's Google-like search allows us to perform point-in-time restores down to the file for recovery in seconds."