

Barton Willmore migrates servers and SAN storage to RapidSwitch

iomart



“With the success of our SAN migration and the ongoing excellent technical support we get, we haven’t looked back.”



iomart customer case study

RapidSwitch provides fully managed dedicated solution

industry

Professional services
Building & Architecture

Objective

To migrate servers and SAN storage off-site to data centre.

Solution

Fully managed dedicated hosting, leased lines and hardware procurement.

Benefits

- Quick and seamless fully managed migration
- Data is secure and fully protected
- High quality technical support
- No more worries about power and cooling



Barton Willmore is the UK’s leading integrated planning and design consultancy. They specialise in the planning, design and delivery of sustainable, dynamic, progressive and commercially viable projects from small country housing developments to city centre skyscrapers.

Headquartered in Reading, Barton Willmore works with leading developers and public sector organisations across all types of development from residential, health & education, to the leisure, industrial and energy sectors. The consultancy has 300 staff and a network of 11 regional and city offices across England, Scotland and Wales which together are responsible for upwards of 30TB of project data for their clients.



Office Move

Barton Willmore is expanding rapidly and in the summer of 2014, moved to new and bigger headquarters at The Blade in Abbey Square, Reading. In conjunction with this move, the consultancy's IT team took a long hard look at their hosting requirements and decided it was also time to move their servers to a full off-premise solution. RapidSwitch, a dedicated hosting division of cloud company iomart, was appointed by Barton Willmore to carry out a major server and SAN migration to its data centre in nearby Maidenhead.

Simon Webb, IT Procurement Officer for Barton Willmore, says, "Our previous offices in Calcot were in the middle of a residential area and we had to keep our servers in an outside barn. We had a lot of problems both with power cuts and also overheating plus we were also running out of space to put new servers so, when the new office move was being planned, we decided to create a better solution for our IT as well.

"Previously we had an external web server hosted with another cloud service provider in the area but the support we got was very patchy so we had already moved to RapidSwitch for a better service. It was a combination of needing better support, more efficient power and cooling and reduced financial outlay that led us to RapidSwitch. With the success of our SAN migration and the ongoing excellent technical support we get, we haven't looked back since."

SAN Migration

The planning for the migration was meticulous and took almost a year before it finally took place at the same time as the office move. What had to be migrated was a massive EMC VNX SAN installation containing both physical and virtual servers. In all about 25 physical servers were moved into RapidSwitch's fully accredited and secure N+1 28000m² data centre in Maidenhead.

Simon Webb explains, "We were pretty nervous about the migration because the SAN holds the data for all our offices and all the projects we are working on. If we had got the migration wrong we would have been in big trouble. However the whole process was incredibly smooth. The RapidSwitch team came and helped us

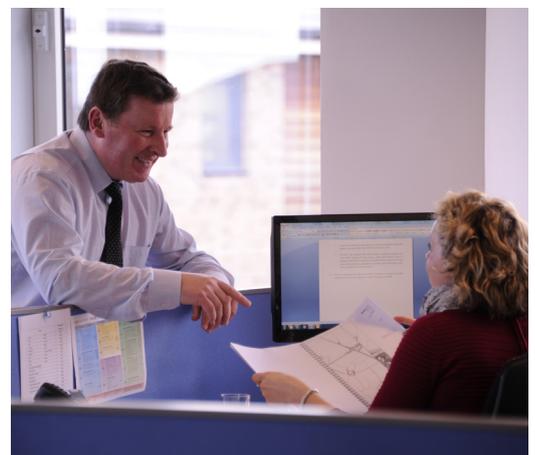
dismantle all the servers and transport them to their data centre and then re-built them with us. They arrived on the Friday evening and by Monday morning we were back online. It was a great team effort between two companies with a mutual goal to ensure minimal downtime and expert set-up."

Storage

The data stored by Barton Willmore on the SAN is mostly file data created by their large team of designers who use software packages such as Photoshop, InDesign and AutoCAD. When the team is working on a project for a client the SAN hosts all the data. Websites that are created for client projects are hosted by the consultancy firm as well.

In addition to the live environment, Barton Willmore uses network attached storage Synology Disc Stations for daily and local backup and archiving. Historically the consultancy had used tape backups but restoration was slow and physical space was running out at the firm's old offices. The Synology devices, which are procured by RapidSwitch, allow Barton Willmore to cache all the day's information and create backups and replication at each local office every night without the need for human intervention. This then replicates automatically to the SAN at the new headquarters in Reading. Barton Willmore are alerted immediately to any problems such as drive failures through the in-built notification system.

"It was a combination of needing better support, more efficient power and cooling and reduced financial outlay that led us to RapidSwitch. With the success of our SAN migration and the ongoing excellent technical support we get, we haven't looked back since"



"Our data is our gold and without it there is no Barton Willmore. It really is very important to us to know that it is secure and protected within RapidSwitch's data centre and the wider iomart Group network."

The full solution

The solution that Barton Willmore now has with RapidSwitch includes two fully managed racks; six high-end dedicated servers; 1GB leased lines into its headquarters and leased lines to their other offices.

As a market leader in offering IP transit and connectivity services RapidSwitch works with multiple leased line providers to ensure redundancy to customers' sites. It sourced the most competitive quotes for leased lines for the Barton Willmore IT team and then arranged the installation while monitoring the entire deployment process from end-to-end.

RapidSwitch procures all the hardware Barton Willmore needs. Simon Webb says, "When we start a new project we just pick up the phone and commission the new hardware. The provision is very quick. RapidSwitch have it all there and it can be set up within minutes."

The Barton Willmore IT team manages the servers while RapidSwitch provides the power, cooling, connectivity, monitoring and 24/7/365 support.

Simon Webb continues, "The RapidSwitch guys monitor everything for us so if something does fail we get alerted straight away which is vastly different from the service we had with our previous hosting provider. We can go down and fix it ourselves if necessary but it's often easier to get the RapidSwitch team to fix it for us."

Outgoing success

The decision by Barton Willmore to outsource has helped to ease the day-to-day worries of their IT management team. Simon Webb says, "Outsourcing to a data centre works and RapidSwitch has really lived up to its name. The RapidSwitch team was totally focused on making things happen as fast as possible when we migrated. All the issues we previously had have gone away. RapidSwitch has provided the whole solution for us."

Neil Christie, Commercial Director for RapidSwitch, explains, "The physical security of our customers' equipment and the protection of their data is at the heart of everything we do. We carry ISO 27001, 2000 and 9001 accreditations and our entire network, transit links and servers are monitored 24 hours a day by the staff on-site at our data centres."

Lee Cripps, IT Manager for Barton Willmore, concludes, "Our data is our gold and without it there is no Barton Willmore. It really is very important to us to know that it is secure and protected within RapidSwitch's data centre and the wider iomart Group network."

To find out more about Barton Willmore visit <http://www.bartonwillmore.co.uk/>