

MCGRAW-HILL EDUCATION EUROPE

“Having Connected in place provides us with peace of mind.”

Mick Symonds
Director of IT for EMEA
McGraw-Hill Education Europe

Mick Symonds says: “Until we looked at Connected, there had never really been anything that so successfully enabled IT to secure desktop and remote-based data in a uniform way.” During pilot testing, end users were given vivid demonstrations of the power of Connected data protection. Mick Symonds would go to people’s machines and ask which of their files were the most critical. Then he would press the delete key. Mick recalls: “And as they started to turn white, I would quickly retrieve the files from the Connected server. We made instant believers with those demonstrations.”



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Soon after their Connected solution was implemented, McGraw-Hill Europe realised that secure local storage allowed a rethink as to where user data should reside. As the Connected solution was deployed, the IT team worked closely with users. The team asked questions to identify the data on which users worked alone, the data they shared widely and the data they shared within their respective workgroups. Mick Symonds says: “We began pushing user data back out to the desktop. The data that’s clearly theirs, such as email, we secure at the desktop.”

Automatic, reliable and secure data protection was the cornerstone of this new storage model. It centralised control of what had been unstructured user data. Mick Symonds confirms: “Having Connected in place provides us with peace of mind, makes us feel comfortable with the fact that users have much more data within their control, because the good thing is, now, we also have control.” Explicitly making user data the responsibility of IT requires a change in thinking. “Everyone talks about the enterprise, but then they focus only on the back-end side of it,” Mick continues. “We try to view the enterprise as a whole and consider every node.”

VALUE

It wasn’t long before the investment in user data protection started showing returns. “In addition to the peace of mind we’ve found with data protection, Connected reduces the amount of time it takes for us to build and deploy new machines to existing users,” says Mick Symonds. “For example, one of our employees

opened the overhead locker on a flight and his machine came crashing out. Since we had all of his data backed up, we were able to reinstall all his files in a new machine within an hour.”

The greatest benefit to the organisation has been the new-found capacity to store user data - especially email - safely beyond the data centre. “The real godsend with Connected is the ability to effectively secure data outside our file servers and quickly redeploy that data wherever it is needed - for any reason,” says Mick Symonds. “We can set flags and triggers to alert us to the last time each machine was backed up, to ensure that all of our backups are completed every night.”

Securing user data locally, beyond the data centre, allows McGraw-Hill to take advantage of the multi-gigabyte hard drives found in today’s PCs and laptops. “Having Connected enables us to reliably store user data beyond our data centre, so our back-end systems don’t bear the whole burden,” says Mick Symonds. Beyond the benefits of protecting PCs and reducing the load on enterprise servers, the Connected solution brings assurance to Mick Symonds and his staff by taking what was unstructured and vulnerable company information and putting it under the control of IT.

“I think every IT professional understands the need to back up important data that resides in locations outside their servers,” concludes Mick Symonds. “This Connected solution brought a huge amount of stability to a previously unstable environment, because it secured all the data. And that’s the critical thing.”