

Campbell Hall

The Case Study

Campbell Hall Taps Quorum for Assured, One-Click Recovery in Minutes

Business Challenges: Speedy recovery after system downtime

In sunny southern California, it's hard to believe anything can go wrong. But the region is not exempt from its share of natural disasters. Earthquakes are, of course, prevalent there, rumbling unannounced and often causing havoc that can take days or weeks to set right. Any West Coast-based organization, therefore, must either have a disaster recovery plan in place for business continuity's sake, or steeled nerves to deal with the ultimate in inconvenience and cost—system downtime.

With its 68-year history, Valley Village, Calif.-based Campbell Hall has indeed weathered its fair share of earthquakes. But ongoing reviews of its current disaster recovery plan revealed some inadequacies. "We were using Symantec Backup Exec, and had tapes stored offsite. We planned to use them to restore servers on new or replacement hardware in the event of a disaster like an earthquake or fire," said Alex Roberts, associate director of technology at Campbell Hall. "But the length of downtime was concerning. We had no good way to recover from a loss of all hardware." In this case, system downtime could last as long as it takes to replace damaged hardware—perhaps a week or more, resulting in a major inconvenience for the prep school's 1,300 system users, who rely on the system to keep operations running inside and outside the classroom.

Roberts and his team began looking into alternative disaster recovery plans that would keep Campbell Hall always on. One option was to run a colocation facility with copies of Campbell Hall's servers. After looking into it, Roberts found the expense and manpower needed for this option was outside Campbell Hall's budget. He also checked into HP StorageWorks D2D Backup System, which Campbell Hall could use as a remote virtual tape library. But despite the solution's bells and whistles, this approach was not much different than what Campbell Hall was currently using, and still didn't address the time challenge of replacing damaged hardware.

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The Solution: Quorum ensures business continuity

It wasn't until Roberts heard about Quorum from another Los Angeles-based prep school that he hit pay dirt. One feature in particular caught his eye. "The ability to run machines directly on the Quorum appliance from an image was the deciding feature," he said. Roberts was referring to the Quorum solution's virtual recovery nodes, which transparently take over in the event of storage, system or site failure. With one click, users are up and running again in minutes rather than days or weeks.

With help from reseller Cal Net, which facilitated the quotes and purchasing, Roberts selected the Quorum solution. Campbell Hall also recently purchased Quorum's Archive Vault, an appliance that works with the Quorum solution and provides customers with the ability to create long-term archive backup of their critical data.

Business Benefits: The Impact: Faster recovery of data, applications and servers

With Quorum now protecting Campbell Hall's 16 servers, Roberts feels much more confident in the school's disaster recovery plan. "Now, our plan can be executed much more rapidly," he said. "The Quorum backup, recovery and continuity solution along with the Archive Vault are much easier to manage and verify."

Probably most important is Campbell Hall's ability to bounce back from disaster quickly. "Our data, applications and systems can now be recovered with one click, meaning that downtime has been slashed from one week to minutes," said Roberts. "I estimate this saves us upwards of \$100,000. Now we're prepared for any disaster that might come our way."

Overall, Roberts has been extremely happy with the Quorum solution, and never fails to marvel at the solution's standout features. "It's a great system," he said. "And the ability to run a machine virtually from an image is something most disaster recovery solutions don't account for. It certainly sets Quorum apart from the competition."

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