

Integrated data protection boosts productivity, lowers cloud costs



Business needs

NG Bailey needed faster, more cost-effective backups and cloud-based disaster recovery. Dell EMC DP series appliances and Cloud Disaster Recovery (Cloud DR) in Microsoft Azure keep their data safe. The DP series' simple interface and tight integration with VMware and VxRail free up their IT staff to focus on new ways to innovate and improve collaboration.

Business results

- Backups complete within minutes vs. up to 14 hours previously
- Up to 193% deduplication; 83.55% on average
- Cloud DR deployed in 2 hours
- Full data center failover in hours, not days/weeks

Customer profiles



NG Bailey

Engineering | United Kingdom

<https://www.ngbailey.com>



CONSTOR SOLUTIONS

IT | United Kingdom

<https://constor.co.uk/>



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Neil Florence

Head of Systems and Infrastructure
for Group ICT, NG Bailey



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Steve Firth

Infrastructure Manager
for Group ICT, NG Bailey

Solutions at a glance

- [Dell EMC PowerProtect DP series appliances](#)
- [Dell EMC Avamar](#)
- [Dell EMC Cloud DR](#)
- [Dell EMC PowerScale](#)
- [Dell EMC VxRail](#)

Partner: [Microsoft Azure](#)

Founded in 1921, NG Bailey has grown from being a small electrical company to become a leading engineering and services business in the United Kingdom. To boost their productivity, they recently transformed their IT with a broad and integrated solution from Dell Technologies: Dell EMC DP series appliances, VxRail hyperconverged systems, and PowerScale unstructured data storage. With a cloud strategy centered on Microsoft Azure, they chose Dell EMC Cloud DR for disaster recovery. Working with them to find and implement the ideal solution for NG Bailey's business needs was Constor Solutions, a converged IT solution provider and Dell Technologies Platinum Partner. Here's their story.

Neil Florence, Head of Systems and Infrastructure for Group ICT (Information and Communications Technology) at NG Bailey told us about his department's goals and their challenges that led them to look for proven and modern data protection – and how they found the right 'fit' with Dell Technologies and Constor Solutions.

Neil Florence: “Our mission is to deliver technological change”

“NG Bailey works across a variety of sectors, within building and infrastructure industries. We have an innovative, forward-thinking approach that allows us to work on some really good groundbreaking projects.

“I lead the Infrastructure and Systems teams within Group ICT. We strive to provide our NG Bailey colleagues with the right tools and technologies to be more productive, to support people in working together, being more effective and staying connected.

“Our mission is to plan, manage and deliver technological change to maximize business benefits while minimizing operational disruption.”

“We're protecting a mixture of data – and it's been a challenge”

“We have structured data that is held within our SaaS and on-premises applications as well as a number of bespoke SQL databases. We also have a large amount of unstructured data.



“One of our organizational goals is to ensure that we've got disaster recovery for our backups. Cloud DR in Azure has allowed us to meet that goal.”

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“The integration with vCenter and being able to see our backups from one location to make sure gives us peace of mind.”

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We need to make sure all this data is protected and available to the business when they need it. In the past, the unstructured side has been quite a challenge for us.”

“Backups were becoming too expensive and too slow as our data grew”

“Previously we had a managed backup service using a market-leading product, and due to the amount of data that we were generating, that backup service was becoming very expensive. We were also starting to run into issues with availability. Some backups were taking longer than the backup window that we had available, so our systems were starting to fail first thing in the morning.

“We knew we wanted to take control of our backups back in-house. And we wanted to increase the speed of our backups so that we could make our systems more available to our business. There’s part of our business that do operate 24/7.”

“We had a conversation with Dell that focused on outcomes, not products”

“We went to the Dell Solutions Center in Limerick, and we had a session where we talked about the company strategy, the ICT strategy and some of our core issues and risks. The conversation wasn’t focused on products. We talked about technology – how it’s going to make life different and mitigate any risks and issues that we have.

“By the end of the conversation, we weren’t looking at a single product, we were looking at it as a suite of products that we could see was going to make a big difference to the way we operate. We could see how it all worked together.

“The Dell team introduced us to Constor Solutions, a Dell Partner who specializes in the appliances and solutions we were looking at.”

“A good fit: We found the right partner and the right solution”

“I remember the day we met Constor very well. We started discussing the solutions and any potential obstacles. It became very clear, very quickly, that the experts from Constor really knew what they were talking about. They have a lot of experience with implementing the products that we were looking at. We followed up by talking with some of their customers and received only positive feedback. It was a good fit for us.”

Steve Firth, Infrastructure Manager for Group ICT at NG Bailey, continued our conversation with his take on how the company’s Dell EMC solution has improved backups and disaster recovery and met their business objectives.

Steve Firth: “We’ve seen huge gains in our backup times with Dell EMC Avamar”

“In the past we’d done VM backups, and they’d take around seven hours to complete, some as much as 14 hours. But now with Dell EMC Avamar, those are completed within minutes, so we’re seeing huge gains when it comes to the backup times for the business.

“When we’re working on upgrade projects, every now and again we need to take an ad hoc backup of certain systems. In the past we’ve needed a day’s gap in the project whilst we organized the backups. Now we can kick off a backup and it’s done within the same day. The project is much more efficient. The time that we’ve been able to gain back has allowed us to focus on improvements to our infrastructure and look at ways of improving our colleagues’ experience.

“On average we’ve seen 83.55% deduplication on our DP4400, and anywhere up to 193% currently.”

“Dell EMC Cloud DR in Azure helps us keep cloud costs low”

“One of our organizational goals is to ensure that we’ve got disaster recovery for our backups. Dell EMC Cloud DR in Azure has allowed us to meet that goal. It’s allowed us to have offsite functionality at a reduced cost. And it’s also allowed us to be selective on which systems we choose to implement this function with, which means we can also make sure our costs are kept low when it comes to the cloud.

“To deploy the Dell EMC Cloud DR in Azure took around two hours from setup. To set up from scratch, and to enable functionality on an individual virtual machine, it’s as simple as adding a tag to that machine within vCenter.

“The main advantages that we saw using the Dell EMC Cloud DR in Azure were on the costs; not having to have another physical appliance to act as a DR for our backups. And we didn’t have to use legacy technology such as tapes as secondary backups.

“Another advantage is that we can reduce our data center footprint and energy usage whilst taking advantage of the cloud.

“Azure is our chosen platform for cloud, we already had a footprint in there. We chose Azure for our cloud disaster recovery and the ability through the DP4400 integrated appliance to use that functionality made sense.”

“We’re considering managing our virtual environment through VxRail”

“We find the interface of DP4400 much easier to use than our previous backup solution. That, plus the integration with vCenter and being able to see our backups from one location to make sure, gives us peace of mind. We can see that the backups are taking place just by looking in vCenter.

“The tight integration between the DP4400 and the VxRail platform, the speed of the backups, it just makes it a better fit and the right solution for NG Bailey.

“VxRail was key to achieving integrated disaster recovery and backup for our virtual environment. With the previous setup, we had no complete disaster recovery. And to do a complete failover from one data center to another would have taken days if not, possibly, weeks. We can now complete this process within a few hours with RecoverPoint for Virtual Machines.

“At NG Bailey, we currently have 495 virtual machines across two data centers. We’ve only recently migrated onto the platform, but we’re projecting growth of about 10% per year. Currently at NG Bailey we’re managing our virtual environment through vCenter, but we’re looking at implementing VxRail operations to assist in the management going forward.”



“Dell EMC DP series appliances give customers the ultimate combination of software-defined data protection.”

Phil Thomas

Sales and Operations Manager,
Constor Solutions

For some thoughts on why this project proved so successful, we spoke with leading members of the Constor Solutions team: Phil Thomas, Sales and Operations Manager and Suman Ramesh Babu, Technical Director. Neil Florence of NG Bailey has the final word.

Suman Babu: “Dell EMC DP series appliances are a simple, hyperconverged solution for data protection”

“One of the major advantages of the DP4400 is the simplicity it brings to the table, especially when we integrate it with VMware on VxRail. That is something which is really simple, particularly when we compare it with what NG Bailey had before. Another advantage NG Bailey saw was that they could upgrade all the components on the DP4400 with just one firmware bundle, just like VxRail. I think the most important thing is that the DP4400 which NG Bailey procured is in line with their strategy on VxRail as well, which is a hyperconverged solution. DP4400 is a hyperconverged solution for the backup side of things.

“Before DP4400 was launched, it used to take days and days for us to bolt everything together. Whereas now, it takes only hours for us to implement the DP4400. There is a significant reduction in complexity for us as partners as well. And with less professional services time required to deploy the solution, that in turn reduces the cost for customers like NG Bailey.”

Phil Thomas: “DP series appliances offer the ultimate combination of software-defined data protection”

“I would say the Dell EMC DP series appliances give customers the ultimate combination of software-defined data protection. The built-in user interface helps companies like NG Bailey to manage and locate that data really simply and easily, or even move or archive that data into any of the major hyper-scalers for a truly hybrid data protection solution.”

Neil Florence: “One of the main selling points was how integrated the products were”

“One of the key things for me on a project like this is flexibility. If we ran into a problem, Constor were there by our side trying to figure out what the solutions were. Nothing was too much for them.

“In terms of the technologies, PowerScale, VxRail and Dell EMC data protection work together. One of the main selling points for us was ultimately how integrated the products were. The close integration of VxRail and Dell EMC data protection has made the configuration and management of our backups so much easier. The speed of the VxRail and the data protection appliances means the backups are taking much less time to complete. And there’s less input that’s actually required. Backups are no longer difficult to manage. DP4400 is very, very easy to use.”



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