



VARONIS CASE STUDY

University of West Scotland



“The project was initiated through a UWS internal audit recommendation. Now that it’s up and running, the flexibility and control that DatAdvantage has now given us makes me realise how much more efficiently we’re managing our processes and what a benefit the product has provided to us.”

THE CUSTOMER

University of West Scotland

LOCATION

Campuses in Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and Paisley – West Scotland

INDUSTRY

Public Sector - Education

Established in 2007 but with its origins dating back to 1897, University of the West of Scotland (UWS) is Scotland's largest modern university. With campuses across the West of Scotland in Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and Paisley, the University occupies an integral position within Scotland's proud tradition of excellence in education. Offering career-focused and vocationally relevant provision, UWS graduates are equipped with the relevant skills to make an immediate contribution to industry, business, public and third sector organisations.



THE CHALLENGE

Located across four campuses, UWS' environment is relatively complex. Its shared drives, across 4 file servers housing 6 terabytes of data, are accessed by 2,000 users.

The challenge for UWS was how to track and monitor which users were accessing these resources and what they were doing. Following a routine internal audit, UWS identified that this lack of visibility was an issue that needed to be addressed. To satisfy its ICT audit it needed to be able to answer the fundamental question of who had access to these shared drives with a comparative degree of detail and granularity.

EVALUATION PARAMETERS

Eighteen months ago, UWS was introduced to Varonis. David Johnston, assistant director of ICT operations, explains, "At the time we simply were unable to monitor access activity on the shared drives and, following an internal audit, we knew this potentially introduced exposure risks to the network. We needed a solution that could answer the question of who was accessing what and what they were doing with it."



THE SOLUTION

DatAdvantage for Windows provides the granular visibility UWS needed.

Today, UWS is using DatAdvantage to aggregate its user and group details, ACL information and all data access events. This allows it to build a complete picture of who can and who is accessing data. David adds, “, When we first deployed DatAdvantage, our primary aim was to address the access audit requirement identified as part of the internal audit. Using the information DatAdvantage aggregates for us we’re now confident that we know exactly what is happening on our shared drives. This means that we can perform a full and thorough ICT audit of access activity, as requested a couple of times a month, which we previously wouldn’t have been able to do.”

Unexpectedly, David’s team has also been able to realise another business benefit. A typical problem faced by every organisation, UWS would often receive requests from users whose data had ‘gone missing’. This would require many staff-hours trying to track down what had happened, if it was even possible. DatAdvantage has cleared this ambiguity up as David explains, “Since using DatAdvantage, we realise it can do so much more than just audit user activity. We can now pinpoint exactly when a file was moved, deleted or renamed and who did it. This wasn’t something we knew we wanted, or even looked to resolve originally, but it’s a fantastic function.”

Moving forward, David knows there is a lot more that can be done and he’s keen to take full advantage of the solution. The next issue UWS would like to tackle is that of stale data. Again, UWS is not alone in facing the expense of overused but underutilised storage space. David knows there is stale data on the network but identifying it and removing it is a huge task. With DatAdvantage the process is no longer arduous – stale data and its respective owners are easily identified so the data can be archived and removed to reclaim storage capacity.



BUSINESS BENEFITS

TRANSPARENCY INTO WHO IS ACCESSING ITS DATA, AND WHAT THEY ARE DOING WITH IT

UWS can identify who is accessing the shared drives and what they are doing to fulfil its access audit requirements.

QUICKLY FIND USERS' MISSING DATA

UWS can pinpoint exactly when a file was moved, deleted or renamed and identify who did it.

IMPROVE STORAGE CAPACITY

UWS plans to use DatAdvantage in the near future to identify and remove stale data to free up expensive and underutilised storage capacity.

ABOUT VARONIS

Varonis is the leading provider of software solutions for unstructured, human-generated enterprise data. Varonis provides an innovative software platform that allows enterprises to map, analyze, manage and migrate their unstructured data. Varonis specializes in human-generated data, a type of unstructured data that includes an enterprise's spreadsheets, word processing documents, presentations, audio files, video files, emails, text messages and any other data created by employees. This data often contains an enterprise's financial information, product plans, strategic initiatives, intellectual property and numerous other forms of vital information. IT and business personnel deploy Varonis software for a variety of use cases, including data governance, data security, archiving, file synchronization, enhanced mobile data accessibility and information collaboration.

Free 30-day assessment:

WITHIN HOURS OF INSTALLATION

You can instantly conduct a permissions audit: File and folder access permissions and how those map to specific users and groups. You can even generate reports.

WITHIN A DAY OF INSTALLATION

Varonis DatAdvantage will begin to show you which users are accessing the data, and how.

WITHIN 3 WEEKS OF INSTALLATION

Varonis DatAdvantage will actually make highly reliable recommendations about how to limit access to files and folders to just those users who need it for their jobs.

START YOUR FREE TRIAL

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