

Fairfield City Council

CASE STUDY

A snapshot of Fairfield City Council's transformative data journey with Meridian IT.





A costly, complex challenge

Located in one of the most culturally diverse regions in Australia, Fairfield City Council relies on huge quantities of data to service a fast-growing community. From financial analytics to CCTV footage, the Council’s data is growing by approximately one terabyte every quarter. Backing up countless data sources manually was not only costly, messy and prone to error – it was becoming almost impossible to achieve within a two-day window every weekend.

Streamlined solution

Meridian IT teamed up with Fairfield City Council to implement IBM Spectrum Protect and IBM Spectrum Protect Plus. This customisable solution ensures the Council can backup and restore physical and virtual systems, on-premises and from the cloud. Robust and cost-effective, Meridian IT has consolidated the Council’s existing platforms and storage devices onto a single, easy-to-use data protection platform.

Fairfield City Council now has a complete backup solution that can keep up with the sheer volume of data it creates as it grows. Automated backups are now performed in minutes rather than days, fuelling

productivity. Fairfield City Council is now backing up entire systems that it didn’t protect previously – and yet its backup infrastructure costs are dramatically lower. It now has the peace of mind that comes from having multiple copies of essential backups, supported by near-instant data recovery.

- **Huge backup savings**
Licensing, hardware and warehousing costs are significantly lower
- **Productivity spike**
Data is backed up in minutes, reducing admin and fuelling productivity for IT staff
- **Disaster recovery assurance**
100% backup success rate and improved resilience, with multiple backup copies in 2 locations.

Bringing Fairfield City Council into the digital age with a resilient data solution

Fairfield City Council turned to Meridian IT to deliver a state-of-the-art backup management solution to manage the sheer volume of data it produces.

Located south-west of the Sydney CBD, Fairfield City Council provides essential services to over 215,000 residents, who live in one of the most culturally vibrant areas in Australia. From running libraries, childcare and leisure centres to maintaining sports facilities and hosting events, the Council’s services are incredibly varied – and constantly expanding.



Fairfield City Council needed a robust and cost-effective solution that could backup and restore huge volumes of data across its physical and virtual systems

With two data centres and a mix of hardware, software and cloud-based backup solutions, the Council's data was becoming complex (and costly) to manage.

"We needed to find a solution that would be quicker, faster and more effective in managing data, with a quick turnaround time if we needed to recover any backups," says Robert Foo, the Council's IT Infrastructure and Operations Manager.

Foo's team is responsible for backing up core databases, but they simply didn't have the capacity to back up everything they needed – including the Council's operating systems.

Struggling to keep track of countless duplicates, they also worried what would happen if one of their data centres failed. Without a disaster recovery plan in place, could essential data be recovered?

Goodbye VHS tapes and floppy disks

Fairfield City Council's CCTV camera network stores up to one terabyte of

data per week – and it's just one piece of a complex data puzzle. Collectively, the Council's data is growing by approximately one terabyte every three or four months.

"When we provide footage to the police, we have to keep a copy on file – it's a regulatory requirement, and it's very important. Some of this footage needs to be stored for up to 15 years, which is a considerable amount of time," explains Darrell Scott, Smart Tech Specialist at Fairfield City Council.

The Council used to store CCTV footage on hard drives, and would send duplicates to storage centres to catalogue. Not only was it hard to keep track of all the different warehouses, duplicates and media formats, but it was difficult to retrieve the footage when needed.

"It could take weeks," says Scott, "and we were concerned about the longevity of USB drives, VHS tapes and floppy disks. What if we didn't have a device to read these formats in future?"

Fairfield City Council needed a future-proofed solution that would consolidate data from over 100 servers, platforms like Windows, Oracle, Solaris, Linux, Cloud-based services and hard drives.

Transformative results for a fast-growing Council

Meridian IT worked closely with Fairfield City Council to implement IBM Spectrum Protect, which automates data backup using the Council's existing infrastructure. A two-day backup can now be completed in minutes, while IBM Spectrum Protect Plus provides near-instant data recovery and can be managed from anywhere.

"The biggest improvements relate to the efficiency and speed of our backups. We don't need as much backup media or disk storage, so cost-wise, it's a lot more effective, too," explains Foo.

By consolidating backup software and de-duplicating and compressing data, Meridian IT has reduced the Council's backup infrastructure costs considerably. Licensing, hardware and warehousing costs are down, while the backup size of the Council's email server solution, MS Exchange, has dropped dramatically.

Meanwhile, productivity is up. IBM Spectrum Protect had improved operational efficiencies through a single, easy-to-use web interface, which makes administration much faster.

As for the customer experience, Scott says Meridian IT's team of experts are quick to resolve issues: "The results are far greater than what I initially thought would be possible. This solution will help any organisation that needs to save data for a long time, but is using outdated processes. It will actually get you into the digital age and reduce your overheads – it has been an amazing journey."

Foo agrees: "Backups are one of the most important things we do in our business unit. Cybersecurity, disaster recovery – they are vital. The confidence we now have in our systems means we can spend time on more important issues, and our relationship with Meridian IT continues to grow."

Fairfield City Council is now working with Meridian IT to manage growth in unstructured data more cost-effectively. Watch this space.

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- IBM Spectrum Protect
- IBM Spectrum Protect Plus



IBM
Spectrum
Protect Plus

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TESTIMONIALS

Meridan IT's solution gives us peace of mind: we are confident that the data is backed up and locked-down, security-wise. Probably the best benefit is its reliability: IBM Spectrum Protect runs without us having to check the lights too much – it just works.

- *Minh Huyn, Server/DB DR Technician,
Fairfield City Council*

"We now have a reliable backup solution and an easy way of restoring what we need, when we need it. Before, our backup window was two-days; now it takes a matter of minutes. This means I can focus more on the architecture of the system, because everything is automated."

- *Alberto Mendoza, Unix Specialist and Database Administrator,
Fairfield City Council*

"This solution will help any organisation that needs to save data for a long time, but is using an outdated backup process. It will actually get you into the digital age – it has been an amazing journey."

- *Darrell Scott, Smart Tech Specialist,
Fairfield City Council*

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