Alexander Forbes Starts its **Cloud Journey** with On-premises **Storage Savings**

Alexander Forbes, the leading retirement, retail, and corporate health adviser in South Africa, found themselves in the typical situation of any large corporation today: **multiplying volumes of unstructured data in myriad formats, representing storage costs and security risks throughout.**

Managing risk is at the heart of all their services so it's no surprise the company had some solid best practices for managing its content.

However, the sheer volume of 'dark data' they were storing on-premises started to threaten security, absorb substantial cost and leave their well-intentioned best practices unfulfilled.

It was time to stop throwing more storage at the problem and manage content in a much more sophisticated way.

STEP 1: **Shrink** Storage **Costs**

Following consultations, technical project meetings and business communications, the Content Management Team at Alexander Forbes agreed that all stale data on file shares and SharePoint that was older than 5 years would be removed from its on-premises servers, with the exception of an exclusion list.

The STEALTHbits file analysis tools were then used to highlight, and then move items that met the defined criteria to lower cost cloud storage.

Reporting and monitoring throughout the process gave the Content Management Team peace of mind that everything was going to plan.

Importantly, the close-out report highlighted **very tangible storage savings** that were communicated to all the relevant stakeholders. One immediate saving opportunity uncovered was a forgotten terabyte-sized file directory that was being backed up regularly - *even though no one had accessed its contents for years....*

> **It is no small achievement to reduce a corporate enterprise data footprint this significantly in a responsible, well planned and executed manner.**
>
> Pierre Blignaut, Information Manager, Alexander Forbes.

20 Terabytes **STORAGE RECLAIMED**

42 **MILLION ITEMS** ARCHIVED

Curbing storage overheads was just the start. Alexander Forbes now intelligently manages content and minimises risk surrounding sensitive data, putting it in much better shape to journey to the cloud....

STEP 2: Ensure **Data Governance**

Significant storage savings on-premises were an early tangible benefit, but alongside that, the STEALTHbits solution has been critical to assessing data security risk prior to a move to the cloud.

In advance of their initial strategy to adopt Microsoft OneDrive for Business, the Company has been able to review its Active Directory security space and put a spotlight on any key areas of remediation. This included ensuring only the right people have access to the right information and applying consistent access permissions.

STEP 3: **Control Data** in the Cloud

The STEALTHbits solution will adapt as Alexander Forbes progresses in its journey to the cloud.

For example, the file analysis tools means that Alexander Forbes can fulfil their content management strategy, taking action on retention and deletion policies and monitoring it going forwards.

STEALTHbits is also forming part of the company's toolset to address POPI (similar to GDPR) as a mechanism for finding and taking action on sensitive data.

Unstructured content in file shares often doesn't have a home in Office 365, so it can be difficult to know what to do with it.

As Alexander Forbes shapes its cloud strategy for the future, they're in a good place having acknowledged their dark data, cleaned it up and invested in tools that turn their best practices into real actions.

Chris Hathaway, Operations Director, Cloud Essentials

essentials

Some of our technology partners:

HubStor™

TransVault™

4WARD 365

STEALTHbits TECHNOLOGIES

BinaryTree

resource xpress

CloudEssentials.com