Bergen Community College (BCC) Takes a Cloud-First Approach to Provide Data Resiliency

Bergen Community College spans three campus locations across Bergen County, New Jersey - Paramus (main campus), Hackensack (Ciarco Learning Center), and Lyndhurst (Bergen Community College at the Meadowlands) serving more than 32,000 students in degree, continuing education, and adult education programs. Considered to be the State of New Jersey's largest community college, the College ranks No. 1 in the state for associate degree graduates.

Like many other businesses and educational institutions, the college struggled with the complexities of managing multiple silos of technology that had been deployed over the years, including supporting disparate data centers and server rooms in different locations.

Moving Beyond Legacy Systems

Aware of the implications of legacy infrastructure in a dynamic and advanced technology environment for teaching and learning, the college IT team, led by Tim Burger, Technical Director, had been studying and assessing various data back-up solutions for years. "From a technology standpoint, our environment had become stagnant, it wasn't moving forward. And it's critical for us to stay

relevant and have a technology environment that allows us to continue to serve the students, faculty, administrators, and staff cost-effectively. We wanted to challenge the norms and provide services for our students that they can't get anywhere else," says Burger. "One of our strategic initiatives has been to move to a much simpler, cloud-first model."

The team was moving toward a hyper-converged infrastructure model and a desktop VDI environment that would allow the college to consolidate much of its legacy hardware infrastructure. However, Burger and his team faced another challenge: What was the best way to back up all the data that had been created by multiple platforms?

Doing the Back-Up Tape Shuffle

That data was being copied to tapes which were then sent to an off-site storage facility for eventual recovery should the college experience a data loss event, like an equipment failure or natural disaster. "The way backups used to work, there were lots of tapes and hands-on shuffling of tapes. We had a person who loaded and unloaded tape, packing them in boxes, shipping, and dealing with failed tapes and backups," explains Burger. "We had three different sites, three different data centers and we needed to consolidate them."

In addition to the tapes, the BCC IT team had to manage the back-up hardware and back-up software necessary to record the tapes — all with different types of agents for different

servers. They had to manage contracts with a tape supply company, a tape encryption company, and an off-site tape storage facility. Managing a tape library quickly reaching the end of life was becoming expensive and challenging.

Burger and his team had considered many options — for years — but nothing seemed to provide the single answer they needed to merge back-up systems and provide a manageable and cost-effective solution.

## A Unified Recommendation from Aspire: Cohesity

That's about the time that Aspire Technology Partners, suggested a novel, cloud-native solution from Cohesity. The Cohesity approach

eliminates mass data fragmentation like BCC was experiencing by consolidating their data silos onto a single, easy-to-manage software-defined platform.

With 89% of Data residing in the Cloud, Data Management with Data Encryption for queries provided easy but secure access. Not only that there is better visibility but a deeper level of data management and backup providing for more resilient operations from a continuity perspective.

"The BCC and Aspire relationship has been close-knit for many years now and Bergen Community College has turned to the Aspire team as a trusted partner," says Burger. "The Aspire team spent the time required to understand what our needs were, and not just pitch whatever solution was going to net the
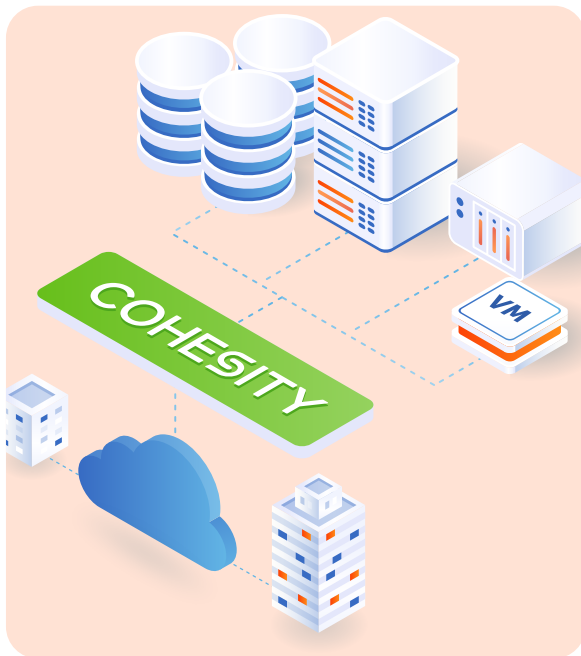
biggest benefit for them. They have always done that. They've always spent a lot of time truly understanding what our projects and strategic initiatives are."

In this case, The Cohesity platform proved to be the perfect answer for BCC. It was able to unite the data fragmentation that existed across different infrastructure silos, locations, clouds, and secure copies.

Burger and his team appreciated the ability to natively push their back-ups to the cloud – and not just a single cloud, but any cloud. Cohesity

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is a multi-cloud platform and gives BCC the ability to make changes in the future. "We wanted to know that the backup product was going to allow that and be flexible," says Burger.

Burger further affirmed, "Now we have a single pane of glass to see how back-ups are working. We didn't have that with our legacy system. We had to open different management tools and have multiple screens open. Now we have a kind of red light, green light approach to it."

Not Just a Partnership, a Relationship

Burger credits Aspire Technology Partners with helping him select the Cohesity solution and manage the complexities of migration. "I think it's all about having that close relationship between, not just a partner, but a trusted partner who you know is looking out for your best interests," says Burger. "When they see new technologies coming up, they point out their potential vulnerabilities or pain points, and they make sure to let us know ahead of time."

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