



University of Miami Deploys Innovative, Real-Time Laptop Backup Service, Powered by Atempo Live Backup™



Formula for University of Miami's Laptop Backup Service

An innovative IT department that seeks to enhance the student experience: For five consecutive years, the UM IT department has been ranked by a leading technology publication as one of the top five best places to work in IT, citing UM's philosophy of actively exploring new technologies and programs that will positively impact the students.

A leading research university and large commuter campus: UM is one of the nation's leading research universities, and home to a large population of commuter students. Laptops are constantly in motion, traveling around UM and off campus as well. Students are notoriously unreliable for performing their own backups.

Atempo Live Backup: An automatic and transparent desktop and laptop backup solution that requires no interaction from end-users, and captures data in real-time.

The Result

myUMbackup: the brainchild of the UM IT department. This real-time backup service for student laptop data was developed to take the burden of backups off of students and provide data protection for the main campus, five remote campuses and research labs. It requires minimal administration and is transparent to the students and the network.

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Organization

The University of Miami is one of the nation's leading research universities. It is home to a vibrant community of talented individuals engaged in the pursuit of academic excellence, the discovery of new knowledge, and service to the region and beyond. More than 15,000 undergraduate and graduate students call the University of Miami home. The University was chartered in 1925 by a group of citizens who felt an institution of higher learning was needed for the development of their young and growing community.

The Challenge

UM students carry their laptops with them just about everywhere they go—to classes, dorms, field trips, and on vacations. Data loss of homework, reports and research can set students back days, weeks or even months, yet students do not want to be burdened with performing their own backups. The challenge was finding a backup solution that students never had to touch and that could protect data both on and off-campus. UM is a large commuter school and being able to provide networking and backup to students off campus is a high priority. "We don't want our students to feel restricted because they are not physically on campus," added Robinson.

Characteristics of University of Miami's Environment

- Intransa IP550/DE5200 8TB SAN,
- 2 Switches 3 Dell Blade Servers:
- 3.6GHz, 4GB RAM, 36GB internal storage
- 1GB Ethernet
- Windows 2003 Server
- Microsoft SQL
- Microsoft IIS Server

The Solution

UM considered several scheduled backup solutions, but decided against scheduled backups because the backup windows would interrupt students and could miss

valuable pieces of data between backups. They selected Atempo Live Backup for their "myUMbackup" service because it captures data in real-time and enables students to restore data by themselves, regardless of physical location. Live Backup also proved easy to manage from the administrative side.

The Live Backup clients are pushed out to students via the university's intranet and UM reports that it takes about as long to make a cup of coffee as it does to manage the Live Backup server per week. It was important to UM to not increase headcount for this project.

UM allots 2GB of space per myUMbackup subscriber, and Live Backup's compression capabilities optimize disk space on the server. Live Backup encrypts the data at the server and transmission layer so UM does not have to manage the content of the data, one of the requirements for their backup service.

Results

The University of Miami justified investing in this project because of the value it brings to the student population. "Whatever the cost, it is worth it to enhance the student experience. Those words carry more weight than an ROI or business justification at the University of Miami," said Robinson. UM students have been able to recover data both on and off-campus, and students have accessed their data from as far away as Mexico and even from an internet connection at sea. "One of our students had a laptop crash recently and was able to sign on to her UM account from her parent's home out of state and restore all her data by herself. She was thrilled," said Robinson. Another student was working on multiple term papers at 2am in the morning and accidentally wrote one term paper over another. Using Live Backup's self recovery wizard, the student restored the first paper back to its original version.