

Friends Reunited



The Client

Friends Reunited is an online organisation that helps people get in touch with old friends from school, university, work, forces, clubs or streets, and provides a forum for members to exchange memories on their message boards.

Acquired by ITV in December 2005 for £120 million, Friends Reunited has more than 18,800,000 registered users worldwide, with an average of more than 5,500 new registrations to the sight on an average day.

One of the most innovative services of its time, Friends Reunited is a fully online business, operating additional websites outside of their reunion service to cover areas such as family tree building, dating and job searches.

The Challenge

Every organisation does their best to ensure that they are protected in the event of a network failure, but even so face the prospect of re-configuring each and every one of their network devices. For an organisation that is run completely online, any downtime becomes even more business critical than usual.

There are numerous solutions on the market that back up and restore data in the event of a system failure, but what such solutions do not deal with is the actual configuration of network devices.

Head of Infrastructure at Friends Reunited, Martin Bell, came across the innovative solution at Infosec, and was so impressed with it, that he placed an order the same day;

"All of our network equipment is to do with the website. Be it firewalls, switches or the load balancers working with our web servers, it is all configured in a certain way to ensure the site runs securely and efficiently.

Clearly, with Friends Reunited being completely based online, to lose any of this configuration information would be absolutely critical, so Restorepoint seemed like the obvious solution."

The Solution

Restorepoint from TADASoft allows users to store the configuration of all of their network devices with true simplicity. Once it is installed, it will retrieve device configuration automatically and store the information to allow administrators to examine or restore them with ease if necessary.

It is as granular as needs be, and can allow multiple administrators to manage configuration backups for a variety of switches, routers, firewalls, proxies and other network appliances from multiple vendors.

It can also be set up to notify the relevant administrator of any configuration change that is made across the network, allowing them to stay in complete control. In addition, users are afforded a little more freedom in testing out how best to configure their network, with no risk of causing a major problem, as they are only ever a couple of clicks away from restoring their earlier configuration.

For peace of mind, Restorepoint is self-maintaining. After the initial configuration, it requires virtually no user intervention: all backups and software updates happen automatically and you only receive a notification if there is a problem requiring attention. There is no software or operating system to install, and all backups can be scheduled and automated on an hourly, weekly or monthly basis, with the option to do this manually as well. In addition, all software updates and product plug-ins are controlled centrally and distributed automatically by TADASoft, who also provide online remote support if necessary.

Friends Reunited continued...



The Results

Friends Reunited have been delighted with the results - after just a couple of weeks use, Restorepoint alerted them to the fact that one of their load balancers was not functioning properly. A quick check found that there was an issue with a flash disk that may have gone unnoticed until it was too late.

As well as keeping the load balancer in check, Restorepoint has been seamlessly doing all of its other jobs for the organisation, as Bell explained;

"Its very easy to use and unobtrusive - installation is simple, and Restorepoint doesn't interfere with anything; it just gets on with storing configurations - the whole system works very well - it sends me an email whenever there is a configuration change, and it grants me the freedom to try things and play with configurations while only ever being a button away from where you were.

It keeps an eye on all of my network devices and lets me know if anything has changed or looks wrong.

The best thing that Restorepoint gives me is peace of mind - it's an excellent tool for administrators and does exactly what it says on the tin."

What would you do if you lost the configuration to your network devices?

To find out more about the Restorepoint Solution,

visit www.tadasoft.com or call 0844 81 55 880