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# Leading Insurance Provider Thinks Ahead, Goes Virtual

**Long-term IT support partnership minimises risk for insurance specialists Endsleigh.**

Endsleigh is the UK's No.1 student insurance specialist, uniquely recommended by the National Union of Students and providing more student policies than anyone else. For more than a decade they have relied on ComputerWorld's IT and systems expertise to give them peace of mind.

A step-by-step approach to Endsleigh's IT strategy, delivered in close partnership with the ComputerWorld team, has meant their systems have scaled up to meet the growing demands of their business.

An early adopter of virtualisation, Endsleigh now enjoys a stable, cost-effective and robust environment that has grown over time to incorporate their production systems and disaster recovery.

**Endsleigh Insurance is a Cheltenham-based UK insurance provider specialising in the student, education, graduate and sport markets. It is the preferred provider for several unions and professional associations.**

## Project at-a-glance

**CHALLENGE**
- Full-scale systems virtualisation for leading insurance provider

**TECHNICAL SOLUTION**
- Dell servers
- Dell storage
- VMware vSphere
- VMware SRM
- Veeam Backup

**BENEFITS**
- Staged approach
- Ageing hardware retired
- Hardware failure risk removed
- Reduced costs
- Improved systems performance
- Assistance on priority projects
- Integration with other systems

**TIMELINE**
- First Virtualisation Project (Legacy system migration) 2008
- IT Partnership established 2000
- Fully Virtualised Environment 2015

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> ## "ComputerWorld have been a real partner for us and have helped shape our IT strategy"

**Chris Murphy – IT Core Services Manager, Endsleigh Insurance**

## First steps

In 2008 Endsleigh had the foresight to go forward with ComputerWorld's recommendation to begin virtualising their systems with a staged first project. The ComputerWorld team worked to migrate important data from legacy systems into a consolidation of VMware ESX hosts. The successful completion of this project enabled the retirement of Endsleigh's ageing physical servers, removing failure risk and providing improved management while also reducing costs.

## The virtualisation journey

With the first project a clear success and the benefits becoming clear, Endsleigh wanted to go further. Following a full provider and vendor review Endsleigh once again chose ComputerWorld's Dell-based solution, as it would give Endsleigh's team the flexibility to build their environment in blocks, expanding as required. ComputerWorld therefore undertook the challenge of bringing Endsleigh's live production systems into a virtualised environment. The first phase saw a switch onto Dell hardware and storage, and latterly a full switch from IBM to Dell servers.

Again, the project ran smoothly with no continuity issues and a seamless migration from physical to virtual. The expanded environment now gives Endsleigh top-flight disaster recovery solutions such as VMware site recovery manager.

## A trusted advisor

"We trust the ComputerWorld team to understand our business and provide solutions that work," says Chris Murphy, IT Core Services Manager. "As well as the virtualisation piece, we've worked closely with them on specific strategic projects, like our data transfer project, which is obviously absolutely vital for a business like ours."

ComputerWorld also liaises with Endsleigh's other IT providers to ensure there is complete join-up wherever their systems touch the virtualised environment.

## Wider solutions

Beyond being Endsleigh's preferred virtualisation partner, ComputerWorld's long-standing relationship and understanding developed over time enables them to provide Endsleigh with further expert support and guidance on

all aspects of IT strategy and solutions, including:

- Email security
- Content and perimeter security
- IT procurement (hardware & network)

## To the next 50 years...

Endsleigh's foresight as one of the first commercial clients to fully embrace the benefits of virtualisation continues to pay off. "We're in great shape," says Chris Murphy, IT Core Services Manager as the business celebrates its 50th year and looks ahead to more growth. "Having ComputerWorld as an ongoing provider gives us peace of mind that our systems are robust, secure and built for future growth."

### Peace of mind for all

Endsleigh specialises in providing Motor, Home & Possessions, Gadget and Travel insurance to students. Their customers want to be able to get their insurance sorted fast, which means online. The majority of Endsleigh's customers prefer to research, arrange and manage their cover online, meaning that systems resilience is business critical.

> ## "We knew virtualisation was an essential step but we wanted to do it right"

**Chris Murphy – IT Core Services Manager, Endsleigh Insurance**

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