



Overview

Country or Region: United Kingdom
Industry: Education

Customer Profile

Sinfin Community School is a co-educational secondary school in Derby. It serves a diverse community reflected in a range of nationalities and socio-economic groups among its 1,100 students.

Education Rationale

On the night of March 22nd 2006 a fire destroyed 23 classrooms and the school's two IT suites. Crucial student examination details and administration data were lost, threatening major disruption to operations.

Solution

IT system rebuilt from scratch in a month. School records now safe and secure. Students access materials anytime, anywhere. More support for less confident students. Improved links with feeder schools.

Benefits

- Students gain anytime, anywhere access to safe, secure data.
- Students, parents and teachers were connected during the rebuild.

Fire-ravaged school rises from the ashes in just one month with new E-Learning Portal

“The experience and skills of Teksys have meant we have a Learning Gateway up and running in less than four weeks.”

Steve Monks, Head Teacher, Sinfin Community School

Sinfin School is a community secondary school for boys and girls aged 11-16, situated to the south of the city of Derby. It serves a highly-diverse community, reflected in a variety of nationalities and socio-economic groups among its 1,100 students.

The fire came at a key point in the school's life: three years after it successfully came out of special measures in a record-breaking 15 months and a few months previously, Sinfin succeeded in gaining specialist engineering college status.

The Education Challenge

After losing all curriculum material and IT functionality, and with final examinations and coursework deadlines approaching the most important priority was to get the whole school back up and running – with administration and IT functions at its heart – in the quickest possible time.

The school decided to take advantage of the situation, by bringing forward the planned implementation of a Microsoft Learning Gateway framework. This was already planned as part of the new IT infrastructure supporting Sinfin's transition to specialist engineering college status.

The Solution

The LEA backed the idea and Microsoft Gold partner, Teksys, were tasked to make it happen. More details overleaf.

The solution took shape quickly. Within two days of the fire, a blueprint for action was drafted. A day later key people visited Shireland Language College in Birmingham, one of the first Microsoft Learning Gateway solutions installed by Teksys, to see a framework in action.

Teksys spent the next three weeks designing the look and feel for Sinfin's Learning Gateway and configuring how the hosted solution would operate. It was agreed that externally hosted servers would be the best way to ensure a rapid implementation. Looking to the future, the system can remain hosted externally, ensuring the school will not be affected as badly should a similar incident happen again.

“All partners involved with getting Sinfin back up and running have worked together to achieve the unthinkable in an incredibly short timescale. The experience and skills of Teksys have meant we have a Learning Gateway up and running in less than four weeks.”

Steve Monks, Head Teacher,
Sinfin Community School

For More Information

Teksys is a specialist Microsoft services business providing a range of consultancy skills and software services to optimise customers' Microsoft-based infrastructure platforms.

For more information about Teksys products and services, call +44 (0)1256 827 555 or visit the Web site at: <http://www.teksys.co.uk>

Sinfin's Learning Gateway framework was hosted across six servers, as was the school's 'curriculum network' using Active Directory Services, which included user names, access rights and other key data. Students required this to access their personalised curriculum when logging on to the IT system.

Teksys still needed to rebuild the curriculum network as all backups were lost in the fire. The only software package remaining with any relevant data was from a school administration system.

Importing the data was a lengthy process as it involved the reformatting of existing data and gaining supplemental information by talking to senior teachers and administrators to confirm details and lists of class and year groups. Finally, the complete data was collated on to Microsoft Excel 2003 spreadsheet software and imported in to Class Server.

Lastly, relevant training was given to department heads and senior employees, who embraced the technology and in turn delivered this training to their colleagues.

The Benefits

Against the odds, Sinfin was up and running with a new fully-functional IT resource from nothing in just four weeks.

- Students gain anytime, anywhere access to safe, secure data.
- Students, parents and teachers are connected during the rebuild.
- More support for less-confident students
- Extending the Gateway to other school communities

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