

Stanley International Betting

CASE STUDY

The online gaming industry is one of the most stringently regulated in the world, governed by both local country and EU laws, but the sheer number and extensive location of Stanley International Betting Points means that it is well placed to understand and navigate local regulations and expand even further into new markets.



With only two IT staff who are responsible for everything from conferences and exhibitions to onsite Wi-Fi, websites and everything in between, it is of the utmost importance to The Lowry that their IT systems 'just work', and that specialist support for the more complex aspects of their infrastructure is totally dependable.

K3 Starcom have been providing IT support and technical guidance. It also prides itself on being consistently competitive in terms of odds and pay-outs, and offers greater coverage than other online betting retailers, including football, American football, athletics, baseball, boxing, cycling, F1, golf, ice-hockey, motorcycling, rugby, snooker, tennis and also lotteries.

The Infrastructure:

Stanley International's head office is based in Liverpool with their data centre located in Malta, and is therefore regulated by Maltese gaming and security laws. Stanley International's main IT department is located in their head office. From there the team of

22 IT staff look after the 150 head office employees, along with the Maltese data centre and the remote offices in Brussels, Croatia and Romania, supporting in total over 15,000 Stanley personnel and agents.

The K3 Starcom Solution:

With these challenges in mind, Stanley International, along with their trusted channel partner, K3 Starcom, wanted to embark on a project that would allow them to decrease their backup windows and increase reliability and capacity over and above that achieved by their existing Overland tape autoloader which had simply been outgrown in expansion.

The storage solution that K3 Starcom proposed was two Tandberg Data StorageLibrary T40s – one residing in Malta (with an LTO-3 SCSI drive) and one in Liverpool (with two LTO-3 fibre drives for simultaneous backup of head office functions). To support the European remote offices K3 Starcom recommended that 3 x Tandberg Data LTO-2 HH rack mount drives were installed. The sites are connected by a VPN and the backup software is BakBone's NetVault, being se

After evaluation and testing working closely alongside the team at K3 Starcom in April 2007, the StorageLibrary T40 was delivered to site. The team at K3 Starcom felt that the StorageLibrary T40 met all of Stanley International's requirements as it was compact in a small 4U form factor (important when you are located in an outsourced, hosted site where square footage costs are high) but boasted the high capacity and performance that serving the 30,000 files a day requires.

When it came to installation, so tight are the conditions that surround the gaming licence, implementing any new equipment into Malta's secure site is a challenge within itself. Just changing a drive alone means gaining local permission in triplicate, and at no time can IT infrastructure changes effect the site's ability to trade. Reliability and uptime were therefore essential factors in Stanley's decision to move to the StorageLibrary T40.

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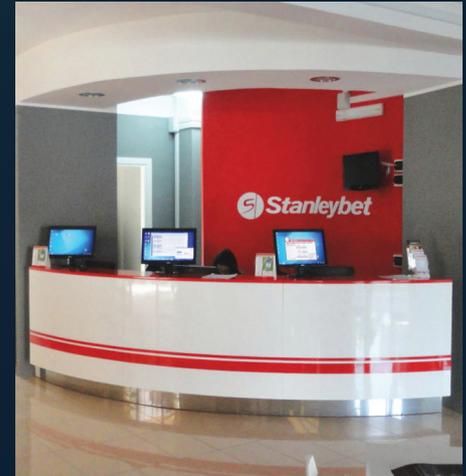
Working hand in hand with K3 Starcom engineers, the StorageLibrary T40 was racked and installed relatively easily within a few days and then the testing, backup and documentation process went live under remote management from Liverpool. The same seamless installation process was applied to manage the head office servers.

Before the move to Malta, the data centre had all been run from Liverpool's head office, with servers being backed up daily and running BakBone's NetVault and a backup window that could easily take over 8 hours. Within the company, data is growing year on year by 25%-30% and there wasn't enough time for such a large back-up window.

Understanding that the back-up window needed to decrease significantly but also allow for growth, the K3 Starcom engineers felt re-assured. With the StorageLibrary T40 solution, the IT team are re-assured to know that they can continue to grow exponentially – both StorageLibrary T40's scale up to 64TB using Capacity on Demand that allows Stanley to purchase more capacity as and when they need it.

Under the performance of the StorageLibrary T40, there has been a significant reduction in terms of time to back-up and if performance ever becomes an issue again at either site, Stanley International are reassured that they can add new drives or upgrade to LTO-4.

The business benefits already experienced in implementing the StorageLibrary T40 which carries 40 slots, means pretty much unattended back-up (previously it had been a manually time consuming job switching tapes conducted by the hosting company). The tapes are then stored off-site in secure, fireproof sites for Disaster Recovery purposes. In Liverpool, the operation operates twice as fast with the two StorageLibrary T40 LTO-3 drives conducting back-ups at once and then sending them directly to the email server, thereby not slowing the network down.



For total Disaster Recovery, all tapes are stored off-site. Stanley International notes that the StorageLibrary T40 has provided easier storage management than experienced before and this can be done easily and remotely to the island data centre using a web interface.

With remote management, the IT team can remotely monitor, control, configure and diagnose the StorageLibrary T40. In addition, for total peace of mind, if something is wrong, the StorageLibrary T40 sends an email to Liverpool with information on the error situation.

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