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DXi7500

## For Close Premium Finance, Quantum DXi7500 is Close to Perfection

With backups taking too long and data growth forecasts predicting no relief, Close Premium Finance knew its future success depended on overhauling its data protection platform. Looking for an integrated disk-tape solution, the company deployed Quantum's DXi7500 disk-based deduplication system and Scalar i500 tape library, cutting backup time more than half while significantly reducing costs.

### PROLONGED BACKUPS AND RELIABILITY CONCERNS DRIVE NEED FOR CHANGE

Close Premium Finance is a pioneering provider of premium finance products and services in the UK and Ireland, with a network of approximately 3,000 brokers that work with the company. More than £1.5 billion (€2 billion) of premiums are funded every year, covering both commercial and personal lines insurance. The company is part of Close Brothers Group plc, the largest independent merchant banking group in the UK.

According to Paul Baker, network engineer for Close Premium Finance, the company's single, aging 4-drive tape library simply was not up to the task of backing up the growing amount of data during the weekend downtime.

"Because we had only four tape drives, 12 jobs were taking almost 48 hours to complete—and that left us no margin for error should a problem occur," Baker says. "If there was a failure, we didn't have time left over the weekend to complete the backup."

At first, daily incremental backups fit neatly within the eight hours allocated to them, but eventually even those efforts at data protection became problematic.

"As the amount of data grew—we now have two terabytes of data on the servers for example—it was taking up to 16 hours to finish even the differential backups," explains Baker. "And restore times were between eight and 24 hours owing to the need to call back tapes from offsite."

The other pressing problem was that the existing hardware had already reached end-of-life status. Throughput was inadequate, for example, and Baker knew it was time for a new approach.

### CHOOSING QUANTUM FOR PLATFORM STRENGTH AND STORAGE EXPERTISE

A fast-growing, forward-thinking organization, Close Premium Finance was looking for a cost-effective, flexible and, above all, responsive solution to overcome its challenges.

"Disk-based backup was immediately appealing because it would allow us to achieve faster backups and restoration of lost data in comparison to tape," says Baker. "It also would provide the benefit of near-continuous data protection, enhance reliability, greatly reduce backup windows, and deliver faster restore capability."

According to Baker, there was one very clear reason why Quantum stood out as the right choice for this new data protection platform.

"When we made the decision, Quantum was the only provider to have a proven technology to deliver [in-line] data deduplication," he says. "The performance, scalability, and reliability of the DXi platform put it leagues ahead of the other vendors. And of course data storage is Quantum's sole business—which to our mind makes them a dedicated, expert specialist."

Close Premium Finance deployed two Quantum DXi7500 disk-based systems integrated with a Quantum Scalar i500 tape library to transform the company's backup and restore capability. One DXi7500 is at the company's Tolworth, West London headquarters, while the other is at a disaster recovery site approximately 20 miles away. Using deduplication, the DXi7500 at Tolworth replicates write-only changes to the disaster recovery site.



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**Paul Baker**  
network engineer,  
Close Premium Finance

### SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- Two Quantum DXi7500 disk backup systems with deduplication and replication
- Quantum Scalar i500 tape library
- CA ARCserve Backup r12.5

### KEY BENEFITS/ROI

- Reduced costs by achieving 88% deduplication rate
- Shrank full backup time from 48 hours to less than 24 hours
- Reduced restore time from hours to a few minutes
- Provided more reliable backups and restores, along with more granular data recovery
- Supported company's acquisition strategy through seamless scalability

## DXI7500 PAYS OFF: REDUCED DISK NEEDS, FASTER BACKUPS/RESTORES AND COST SAVINGS

So what difference has the DXi7500 made to Close Premium Finance?

"We estimate that we're achieving 88 percent data deduplication using the DXi7500. This helps the company save significant time and money—while reducing disk requirements substantially," says Baker.

Instead of needing 4.5 TB of disk to accommodate a weekend backup, the company now only needs 500 GB of disk space. Similarly, only 500 GB of data needs to be replicated to the disaster recovery site.

"The full backup over the weekend of 4.5 TB of data used to take almost the entire weekend," Baker explains. "Now, however, thanks to the data deduplication capability of the DXi7500, we have shrunk that from 48 hours to less than 24 hours. The only limit to the consecutive backup performance is the network bandwidth—never the DXi systems."

By reducing the amount of data that needs to be backed up and replicated, the DXi7500 has also enabled Close Premium Finance to save on space, power, cooling and data transfer/bandwidth costs. In addition, the company has benefitted from greater flexibility—adding new backup sets with the increase in available virtual tape drives.

"We've configured 12 virtual tape drives on the Quantum disk-based storage platform, which has further boosted performance. As a result, the restore time for data up to two weeks old is now down to a few minutes compared with hours previously," reports Baker. "Overall, we get fast, reliable backup and restores and an increased number of recovery points, but have less need for disk capacity."

With the company's data volumes growing unpredictably—partly as a result of business acquisitions—Close Premium Finance appreciates the ability of the DXi7500 to scale easily, allowing systems to grow along with data.

"Thanks to Quantum, we now have greater confidence in enterprise backup; we know the data will be there whenever it's needed," says Baker.

"Thanks to the data deduplication capability of the DXi7500, we have shrunk the time needed to do a full backup from 48 hours to less than 24 hours. The only limit to the consecutive backup performance is the network bandwidth—never the DXi systems."

**Paul Baker,**  
network engineer,  
Close Premium Finance

## ABOUT CLOSE PREMIUM FINANCE

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### What is Q&U?

Our goal is to preserve the world's most important data. Yours. Q&U is Quantum's approach of collaborating with you to address your specific data protection and retention challenges. It's about sharing our insights and expertise, giving you the resources to make educated choices, and delivering comprehensive solutions that help you tackle today's challenges while preparing for tomorrow. When Q&U come together, great things happen.

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