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| Server | rs15.uk-noc.com |
| Date | 23rd October 2021 |
| Incident | Server restore from backup |
| RFO by | Chris James @ Sub 6 Limited (Clook Internet) |

Incident Details

The above server was suffering from minor filesystem corruption that our monitoring detected. At approx 3.55pm on Saturday 23rd October 2021 when routinely replacing a hard drive in the RAID array (multiple drives spanned together to create a single storage device) which should cause an array rebuild to the new drive without any downtime, the RAID array became unrecognisable meaning that all primary storage was unreadable to the server.

We tried to repair and recover the storage on the server without success so at 4.20pm it was decided to enact our disaster recovery procedures by reinstalling the server operating system/software and restore all user data from backup. The operating system install was completed at 5.30pm and the rest of the server software installation and configuration completed at 6.10pm.

Following on from this we started the restore of all user accounts and data which unfortunately took some time to complete due to the volume of data. During this time most websites and services remained offline with sites appearing back online as they got restored from backup. The user data restore was completed at 7.50pm at which time most websites and services should have been appearing back online.

Following on from the restore, it became apparent that in < 10% of account restores, some element of the restore was missing so throughout Sunday and Monday we put all efforts into working through the restore logs and manually restoring any parts of account (which ranged from unnoticeable parts of the account to more significant elements such as email accounts). We also concentrated on working through any issues reported by clients on an individual basis to ensure that all restores were complete.

To confirm, while the restore procedure did not 100% complete every single account, the backup data was available and allowed us to restore from manually where required.
Continued...



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Corrective Actions

It is clear during this outage that while our server backup software carries out backups in a timely and effective manner, the disaster recovery feature for restoring data in situations like we faced are not 100% reliable as can be seen with the parts of the restore that it missed. We are treating this extremely seriously as we deem it critical to have a smooth and robust disaster recovery process. Discussions are ongoing with the third party software vendor and we have developed a custom restoration procedure and script that is not reliant on the third party software. The development of these scripts is complete meaning that any future recoveries from backup will be much smoother while retaining the features in the cPanel for user restorations of account elements.

It has also been highlighted during this issue that our communication throughout could have been better with more regular updates. Work is underway to review our disaster recovery communication policies with a view to having documented timescales on which updates should be sent, even if the status is largely unchanged from the previous update in order to keep in touch with clients.

While there is never a good time for an event such as this, we are aware that many clients affected have only recently been migrated to this hardware. This migration, when combined with the increased resources on packages recently rolled out should have been a positive step forward for our service and it is understandable this issue has tarnished this. We do not expect any more stability issues on the hardware after the restore and apologise for any inconvenience caused by the outage.

As a gesture of goodwill we will be adding a free month of service to all accounts affected.

Please feel free to contact us as soon as possible if any issues are noticed with any account on the server after the weekends restore and we will immediately help. All backup data will remain available and is intact in the event we need to access it for any further file/data restores. Our helpdesk can be access via our client area at <https://my.clook.net/clients/>

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