



Business critical data survives factory fire

When a devastating fire destroyed the Jones Odell factory in Auckland, they were able to open in a new location five days later thanks to support from Softsource who retrieved all the company's records from a melted and water damaged HP notebook.

The need

John Forrest, Managing Director of Jones Odell, one of Auckland's largest motor vehicle customisation businesses, was in Melbourne for Labour weekend when he received a midnight phone call from the New Zealand Fire Service telling him his factory was on fire.

The blaze, which took 15 fire appliances to bring it under control, started as an electrical fire and tore quickly through the factory completely destroying the second floor office where all the company's records were kept.

While waiting to board the first flight back to New Zealand, Forrest called John Harrop, a Director of Softsource, an IT Solutions Company providing specialist computer infrastructure services, to let him know the news.

A month prior to the fire, Softsource had been speaking with Forrest about upgrading Jones Odell's current technology infrastructure so Harrop understood the importance of the company's technology infrastructure and data.

"John said he'd seen the fire on the news and that he had already been out to the factory," says Forrest. "He was one of the first people on site but wasn't allowed in until it had been declared a safe zone." Harrop knew that retrieving an HP N6125 notebook that had been left in the office when the factory caught fire and quickly ascertaining what information on the notebook could be salvaged was of critical importance to getting the Jones Odell business up and running again.

Once recovered Forrest's notebook, which was left in the office in case anyone needed to access company information, was burnt, melted and water damaged from the fire hose and would have looked to most people, completely beyond repair.



Recovering the data

With the notebook damaged to the point where it was falling apart, it would be easy to assume the information inside was irretrievable and simply throw the machine away.

"We were shocked by the state of the notebook" says Harrop. "However, after a quick examination we realised that we would be able to retrieve the data using shadow protect software and virtualisation technology. Knowing how important the information was to Jones Odell, we were able to retrieve that data and make it available to the company on the replacement HP 6710b notebook within 24 hours."



The HP N6125 notebook was nearly unrecognisable after fire and water damage.

Back to business

With all the company records available, Jones Odell reopened in a new location just five days later. If retrieval of the data from the damaged notebook had not been possible, it would have taken the business significantly longer to reopen.

“Having all our records, including the financials, retrieved so quickly has made rebuilding so much easier” says Forrest. “John and the team also upgraded my notebook so that I can now take it with me when I travel, which means I now have the ability to run the company from anywhere in the world.”

The importance of backing up data has also been driven home by the incident, which is something that Oliver Hill, Account Manager for Hewlett-Packard New Zealand, confirms.

“Backing up your data regularly is essential,” Hill says. “It is extremely disruptive and inconvenient to lose access to your data and records and it is very difficult for a business to meet its regulatory requirements without these, even if they are lost in an accident.

“Knowing how difficult it is for companies to operate without access to their data, HP has an array of backup options from large server and storage solutions right down to pocket media drives that plug straight into a notebook and allow for quick back-up when someone is on the go.”

In the case of Jones Odell, the company subsequently commissioned Softsource to rebuild the company’s IT infrastructure. To date, the company have so far installed an HP ProLiant ML110 server and supplied a new HP notebook, desktop PCs, routers, internet connections as well as installing all the network cabling. Softsource will continue to guide Jones Odell as the business grows.

Additionally, Jones Odell’s business critical information is now backed-up daily to a portable key, which is removed from the factory every night and therefore significantly reduces the risk to the business caused by keeping all copies of the data in one place.

“We have a very basic network at the moment, but as we grow the team at Softsource are directing us on technology solutions that will reduce risk and provide real benefits to our business” says Forrest. “Throughout this process we couldn’t have asked for more support. Knowing the state of the notebook following the fire, we are still amazed that, thanks to Softsource and the robustness of our HP notebook, all of our records were recovered so quickly.”



“The commitment and service that Softsource has shown Jones Odell during our time of need rebuilding after the fire that wiped out our factory was one that I have never experienced from any other service company.

Not only did Softsource help us rebuild our IT infrastructure and salvage crucial data from our melted laptops and PC’s, they were there before the last fire engine left the scene assessing our loss and starting to put an action plan in place to get us up and running in the shortest period of time.

It is with the greatest admiration for the Softsource team that I recommend them to all businesses as the number 1 IT support company in New Zealand”

John Forrest
Managing Director
JAAS Motor Bodies Ltd

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