

FLR Connects Florida State University To Remote Data Storage and Disaster Recovery Facilities

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Although hurricane season has been relatively quiet so far, we all know that September is the time of year when activity usually starts to pick up. A major initiative in the Office of Technology Integration (OTI) at Florida State University this past year has been the development of a remote computing capability to support the university's IT disaster recovery and business continuity efforts. The primary objective was to leverage FSU's participation in the Florida LambdaRail (FLR) to ensure the preservation of critical IT data and to provide a limited set of essential IT services from a remote location should a disastrous event strike the Tallahassee campus.

FLR, along with its companion network, the National LambdaRail (NLR, <http://www.nlr.net>), provide affordable bandwidth at a scale making it feasible to perform high volume network backups to a location outside of the hurricane-susceptible region. All files currently residing on OTI's centrally administered servers and storage systems are backed up to local tape resources as well as to a remote site such that a version of any file can be recovered with a target recovery point of 24 hours (local resources) to 48 hours (remote site). Currently, more than 2 terabytes of files are shipped to the remote site every day.

Critical data is protected by way of a Network Attached Storage (NAS) service offered by OTI. Storage is made available across the campus network to any departmental server utilizing the Common Internet File System (CIFS) protocol. Also, as an option, the Network File System (NFS) protocol is available. System administrators can effectively address the requirements for off-site disaster recovery backups simply by storing critical data directly on the NAS device. As with other central storage systems, the NAS is backed up locally and to the remote site. Tape backups and off-site storage requirements are no longer necessary. Everything is done across the FLR network. The cost of the service is ~\$15/Gigabyte/year.

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