

# Lawrence Academy Chooses StarWind Virtual SAN Software for Shared Storage

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“No downtime: we just set it and forget it.” ””

Kyle Jones, IT Manager, Lawrence Academy



## About the Company

**Historic Lawrence Academy** is a private high school located in Groton, MA. Founded in 1793, it has approximately 400 students and 70 faculty members. This population, along with other staff, brings the total number of IT users to about 500.

The campus is equipped with the latest in IT technology, fully networked with wireless high-speed Internet set up to enable wireless conferencing in dorm rooms. More than 200 PCs and Macintosh® computers are in use, and since it is a boarding school, access requirements are nearly 24/7. It is critical to ensure that everything is running at peak performance when the school year starts in September of each year, according to Kyle Jones, Lawrence's information systems manager.

[www.lacademy.edu](http://www.lacademy.edu)

## Industry

Education

## Environment

HP Servers and disk arrays, wireless high-speed Internet, Virtual Iron server virtualization software.

## Key Challenges

Relieve the work load on the IT department and implement a disaster recovery solution.

## Solution

StarWind Virtual SAN

## Business Benefits

Administration and upgrades are simplified and streamlined. A solid disaster recovery plan gives the school peace of mind.

## PROBLEM

Like any academic institution, Lawrence has a limited IT budget and last year the school planned to implement a more rigorous infrastructure with a Disaster Recovery plan. Lawrence needed a scalable, cost-effective, centrally managed storage infrastructure with DR capability for the data and media to protect academic records, fund raising accounts and general back-office information.

Annual upgrades and a new disaster recovery plan had to be completed within the limited IT budget and without compromising projects in the IT department. With that in mind, Kyle Jones began to look at server virtualization. The IT team installed Hewlett Packard® HPA NSA 1510 disk arrays and planned to add Virtual Iron® software to provide cost-effective, production-ready server virtualization. But they soon found that the planned infrastructure wouldn't achieve what they planned without scalable, centrally managed shared storage. After evaluating a number of SAN products, the IT team realized that their budget was very limited to purchase the necessary shared storage at capacity that they required.

## SOLUTION

Lawrence evaluated **StarWind Virtual SAN** software which is used to convert any standard 64-bit or 32-bit Windows server into a fully-functional SAN and works over existing Ethernet network. It was not long that Kyle Jones realized that he would achieve his shared storage requirements with the help of StarWind and he could do it all cost-effectively and within budget. StarWind shared storage now supplies primary data storage for a largely Citrix®-based server farm, supporting asset tracking, PHP Web servers, print servers, network time portal and the library card catalog as well as Windows® update servers and all manner of additional services that the IT team delivers to support the institution's IT needs. Now all storage can be migrated live and managed centrally on the existing network. The small IT team no longer wastes time running around to each computer in order when finally data is stored centrally where it is considerably easier to manage and protected, especially in line with the new Disaster Recovery plan. Time saved from carrying out these activities gives the team more breathing room to manage the annual summer crunch of upgrade and reconfiguration activity.

“Since I installed the **StarWind Virtual SAN**, I haven't touched it,” said Jones, “No downtime: we just set it and forget it.”

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With Starwind in place, Lawrence has created an affordable disaster recovery solution. Shared storage allows for easy access to copies of school data. Recently the IT team began planning a remote storage location to allow remote recovery of any system at the main campus that might be shut down by a disaster.