

xfm case study: fairprint

"Having an XFM is a bit like having a new Ferrari. You've got something that's extremely fast, it handles so well, and you know you've just got the best.

It was incredible when we bought it [a year ago], and it's still just as incredible today. We marvel at it. We love to talk about it with everyone that comes in and understands the innards of the business. We love our jobs, in part because the XFM makes it so easy."

— Ben Hutson
Software Developer
Fairprint

corporate background

Fairprint is a leading print company in the United Kingdom. Their business is built on FileMaker; it's the beating heart of operations. From automatically processing orders, to dispatching completed jobs from the factory, with many steps in between, FileMaker plays a critical role in productivity. Fairprint has around 50 employees all of whom rely on FileMaker throughout the day. With this amount of continuous access, supporting thousands of customers, it's essential that they never lose data.

growing problems

As Fairprint grew in success and developed a larger client base, their previous solution began to falter under increased stress. Hourly backups of the database caused occasional lag and interruptions for FileMaker clients. In addition, the server would require two to three unscheduled restarts a week for maintenance.

These irregular restarts would potentially cause database corruption, so Fairprint would sometimes need to recover the database to an earlier state, which typically took between 45-60 minutes. With 25+ people crippled in productivity and sitting in the dark, Fairprint was losing time and potential money. If customers called to inquire about new or existing orders, the only response would be, "We can't answer your question because we're down at the moment"—an uncomfortable position for any company.

permanent solution

Armed with a new solution pairing FileMaker with XFM, Fairprint has optimized productivity and limited those high-stress database recoveries. Even with a database twice the previous size, 2,500 products, thousands of customers, and hundreds of print jobs a day, the new XFM solution has virtually no down time and remains completely responsive during backups.

Restoring a backup has gone from about one hour to five minutes. The rate of creating backups has increased from one per hour to over 700 backups a day, providing improved ability to recover from any user or developer errors while working with a live system. As stated by a Fairprint representative, "XFM has changed our business for the better, permanently."

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contact us

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“As developers we can develop in a live environment worry free. As users we know we can do our job almost uninterrupted every day. As a business we know that our data solution, the core of our business, is running at its best with business class data protection. XFM has benefited our data, our staff, and our customers — overall XFM has been a huge success for Fairprint. We were excited the day we got it, and we’re still excited about it today.”

— Fairprint, UK

when time matters

What is there to gain by utilizing a FileMaker solution with XFM? Fairprint found that, by using hardware designed specifically for FileMaker, they gained substantial savings in time:

- 60 minutes per restart x3 occurrences a week = 3 hours “frozen” a week
- x52 weeks a year x25 FileMaker users = 3,900 person-hours a year

This equates to about **one month saved each year per employee.**

More than just saving time, Fairprint gained confidence in their database and reduced work-place stress. With a new solution, their internals have grown to around 50 users and two full-time developers working on FileMaker.

enhanced backups

Prior to XFM, Fairprint decided the right tradeoff between business continuity, risk, and backup predictability was about an hour, and for restores about 45 minutes. By default, XFMs provide 15 minute backup cycles, but Fairprint wanted even better. They wanted the highest granularity and the most reliable backups possible. Working with XFM, Fairprint defined a 2 minute backup cycle with 5 minute restores.

Before XFM	After XFM	Average Improvement
60 minute backup	2 minute backup	3,000%
45 minute restore	5 minute restore	900%

Fairprint also received a disaster recovery plan. The XFM comes with software which moves compressed and fully-usable backups to a separate backup server for complete redundancy. These backups are then available to restore at two minute increments, at the click of a button. Fairprint benefits from FileMaker’s ability to produce rapid-cycle business logic and now with XFM, high-quality on-site and off-site business class data protection. With near-instant backups every few minutes, customers don’t only get the fastest storage in the world—they get FileMaker’s best business class service.