FAST LTA

Customer Case Study | Silent Bricks | (Semi-)static Heritage Archive

# How immutable archiving helped the Municipality of Leeuwarden protect digital heritage

**For the Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden, the municipality sought a way to store digitised collections locally over the long term. It selected Silent Bricks, with data integrity checks and hardware-based WORM protection for final archive files.**

## When the original dissapears

The Historisch Centrum Leeuwarden (HCL) manages collections documenting the history of the city and its surroundings. It receives photographs, slides, negatives and documents, among other materials. Volunteers digitise part of these collections. The municipality managed HCL's IT infrastructure and asked Oppedijk in 2016 to find a solution for the growing volume of archive data.

This data was stored across various systems and media, including USB drives and CDs. This provided insufficient assurance for long-term preservation. A backup can help restore files after an incident. An archive also requires integrity checks, clearly defined access rights and a way to protect the final version against modifications. For HCL, another consideration was how to migrate data to new storage in the future without loss.

## The experience?

**"There are slides that have since deteriorated, but were scanned just in time."**

Jeen Oppedijk, Senior ICT Specialist at the Municipality of Leeuwarden



Photo's: Gemeente Leeuwarden, February 2020

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## Turning requirements into a workflow

A project manager defined the requirements in 2017. The archive had to remain local and under the municipality's own management, be energy-efficient and support future growth. Data had to be stored redundantly, remain easily accessible and undergo periodic integrity checks. The municipality wanted to use open formats and standards to reduce dependencies during future migrations. The requirement for local storage aligned with the municipality's policy at the time of placing data in the cloud only under certain conditions. One further strict requirement applied to final archive data. Once written, it had to be impossible to modify the data at the hardware level.

Following preliminary research and a mini-competition after a European tender procedure, the municipality selected Silent Bricks from FAST LTA. Comex was the Dutch representative and selected partner. According to Oppedijk, the hardware-based WORM functionality was the deciding factor. The municipality deployed two systems, combining regular storage and WORM storage. Comex worked with reseller NoRISK IT on delivery and installation.

HCL initially placed files in an intermediate environment, where metadata could be added. Only then were two authorised individuals permitted to copy the data to WORM storage. This sequence provided the archive with a checkpoint before a file was permanently stored. According to Oppedijk, the stored data was checked weekly and maintained with threefold redundancy. The technology therefore aligned with how HCL wanted to manage access to its archive.

## What the municipality could do with it

When the original case study was published in 2020, HCL was using Silent Bricks for its historical collections. The municipality also used the same solution for a digital semi-archive. This included, for example, videos of sewer inspections and financial data. These files had limited retention periods. Oppedijk indicated that the videos could be played back from the system quickly enough for their intended purpose. This gave the storage solution a practical application beyond the historical archive.

The growth of the archive required additional capacity. Oppedijk was able to install expansions himself. This meant that further growth could remain part of the municipality's daily management.

**"The configuration took about an hour. Since then, I have installed several expansions myself, which shows how easy the system is to work with."**

Jeen Oppedijk, senior ICT-specialist at the Municipality of Leeuwarden

**Hello.**

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