



## Cornwall College tightens laptop security belt – how the College implemented Absolute Software’s Computrace® to safeguard against theft

Established in 1929, Cornwall College offers a wide range of A-levels and vocational courses to a variety of students of different ages. It has seven campuses: Cornwall College campuses at Camborne, St Austell, Saltash, and Newquay. The Falmouth Marine School and Duchy College campuses at Stoke Climsland and Rosewarne. It’s the third largest further education college in the UK with a student population of around 40,000.

Owing to current trends for remote working and staff operating between different campuses, concerns over IT security at any college will always be under the spotlight. Employees need to be cautious with company hardware, but mistakes due to human error will inevitably happen, and when they do, it’s the College that is accountable.

### Laptop liabilities

Several staff laptops had been stolen in the past, so Cornwall College’s IT team looked into tighter security measures. Previously, etching techniques were used to write contact details on laptops, which would show up in UV lights if missing laptops were recovered by the police. However, this process was time consuming and ineffective. Crucially, it also failed to proactively search for missing hardware, according to Sara Opie, Helpdesk Analyst at Cornwall College.

The College required a solution that would both deter thieves and recover any stolen devices. The IT department evaluated the options available – but in the end, they chose Computrace, an IT asset management, data protection, and computer theft recovery solution from Absolute Software. Not only does Computrace help locate missing laptops by monitoring the location of computers on or off the network, it also includes the support of the Absolute Theft Recovery team, which tracks and recovers stolen computers. Giving organisations a strong defence against data security threats, Computrace additionally allows administrators to remotely delete data from compromised machines.

### Keeping track of lost laptops

The College currently has 906 active licences and installs Computrace on any new laptops that are purchased.

“Keeping track of employees’ laptops can be a nightmare in terms of administration and organisation, and that’s before you’ve made allowances for inevitable human error. Laptops can easily be left behind when busy staff are on the move,” said Opie.

If a laptop is stolen and an Internet connection is made, the software detects this and sends alerts to the Customer Centre every 15 minutes. Once the theft report has been entered into Customer Centre, the Absolute Theft Recovery Team begins the investigation to track the laptop’s whereabouts via a series of forensic tools including geolocation and file scanning. They then provide this information to local law enforcement agents, who use it to track and recover the device.

The College also has the option of using the Data Delete function, which would block a thief from accessing any confidential information. However, the College has certain procedures in

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**Sara Opie**  
Helpdesk Analyst  
Cornwall College

**Absolute**<sup>®</sup>  
COMPUTRACE

place, including Remote Desktop, so staff have no need to store confidential data on laptops in the first instance.

The Computrace agent is usually installed in the laptop's firmware at the time of manufacture. However, customers are also able to install the software on existing laptops, instead of having to buy a new device.

"The installation of Computrace was very quick and easy. We were delighted with how smooth the operation was and how efficiently Absolute Software dealt with any problems that arose," said Opie.

### Computrace – ensuring long-term protection

Since implementation, opportunist thieves have stolen three laptops from the campus offices on separate occasions. On one occasion, blind to the dangers of being caught red-handed, an unsuspecting criminal connected to the Internet, allowing Computrace to send location information to the Absolute Monitoring Centre. Using this information, the Absolute Theft Recovery Team was able to track and locate one of the stolen machines, which was located and retrieved in a matter of weeks.

The device was found in Newquay, where an arrest was made at the scene. The laptop is currently being used as hard evidence in trial and will be returned to the college following the verdict.

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"The new software is proving extremely popular with staff," continued Opie. "Now, the IT department has complete peace of mind when it comes to laptop security."

### About Absolute Computrace

Absolute Computrace by Absolute Software allows organizations to centrally track and secure their IT assets within a single cloud-based console –the Absolute Customer Center. They can easily identify computers and ultra-portable devices that have gone missing, enforce software policies, and maintain a fleet of optimally running devices. Most importantly, they can remotely invoke preemptive or reactive security measures to safeguard each device and the data it contains.

### About Absolute Software

Absolute Software is the global leader in firmware-embedded persistent endpoint security and management solutions.

We provide organisations with comprehensive visibility and control over all of their endpoints – regardless of user or location. Our customers are able to optimise productivity, reduce operating costs, prove compliance, and remotely secure all of their devices and the corporate data they contain.

