Data#3

Digital Transformation solution helps staff serve their community

# Data#3

OBJECTIVE

The customer organisation utilised a range of operating systems across the business, with some at the end of mainstream support. Introducing a standard operating environment ("SOE"), a modern, Microsoft Office 365 ("Office 365") based workplace, and a refresh of the intranet and electronic document and record management system ("EDRMS") would lead to new opportunities to support the community.
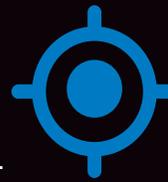
APPROACH

Aware of the importance of modernising their IT systems to enable a continued high standard of processes for the future, the organisation embarked on a rigorous tender process to find a deserving partner, with the capability to empower staff throughout their digital transformation journey. Data#3 was determined to have the right mix of expertise, reputation and price.

COMMENTS

The complexity of transitioning to a modern workplace with the right back up can be daunting but working closely with a partner like Data#3 can help make your digital transformation journey simple.

Carlos Gouveia, General Manager for Victoria & Tasmania, Data#3 Limited.

BENEFITS

A comprehensive digital transformation, across the following organisational and technical facets:

- A Microsoft Windows 10 SOE
- Modern workplaces based on Microsoft Office 365
- A modern intranet and electronic document and record management system
- Dependable backup and restore using Veeam and iland
- Reduced risk of data loss
- Standardised, mobile-friendly work environments
- 90% of staff able to work from home
- Fast increase in collaboration

TECHNOLOGY

- ☑ **Microsoft Windows 10 SOE and Migration**
- ☑ **Microsoft Office 365**
- ☑ **Modern Workplace**
- ☑ **Cloud Backup**
- ☑ **Managed Services**
- ☑ **Veeam via iLand Services**
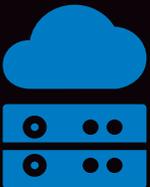
The Challenge

The customer's technology landscape had changed little in recent years and they knew there were many new technologies available to modernise the current work environment. There was an opportunity to embark on a digital transformation journey that would allow the business to continue serving the community well into the future.

"As an organisation that provides support to the people of Victoria, we knew it was vital that their IT systems supported the best processes possible. Fortunately, they knew that to be successful, they would need to embrace digital transformation," said Data#3 General Manager for Victoria and Tasmania, Carlos Gouveia.

Modern Workplace

The existing environment included a combination of Windows 7 and 8, as well as some current Windows 10 operating systems along with Microsoft Exchange running on ageing on-premise infrastructure. In addition, the previous intranet and electronic document and record management system ("EDRMS") did not support the collaborative environment needed. A change was due, which was seen as an opportunity to introduce technologies that supported the business's 'cloud first' strategy to create a digital transformation in the way staff worked.

"Understanding the capability of your workplace as it stands is only the first step of a digital transformation journey. But knowing where to go from there can be difficult without the right help," said Data#3 General Manager for Victoria and Tasmania, Carlos Gouveia.

Standardising the operating system ensured the organisation adhered to the value of *"keeping it simple"*, and allowed the IT team to work in a consistent environment with lower support demands. The solution required a skills transfer to Windows 10 and Office 365, so that the team was fully prepared to support the business through the transition.

For the organisation's 200 users, the technology updates represented significant changes to their familiar work environment. Addressing the human side of the project was a critical need, and one they knew would dictate the outcome.

"Resistance to change is often greater than technology change, as a business it is important they are managing the human aspect of implementing any new technology. Some of their users had been using Windows 8 for many years, they had familiar apps, and the moment you say you're upgrading, there can be resistance," explained Gouveia.

Further change was required for the ageing EDRMS and intranet technology in use across the business. The existing solution made it difficult for staff to access a centralised source of truth, as multiple records were in use across the organisation.

Deployment of a modern EDRMS and intranet solution positions the company to nnot only seamlessly align the new application, database and infrastructure with the new technology deployed as part of the overall digital transformation project, but also ignite organisational change in the working processes for staff.

"The organisation works with a great deal of information every day.Being able to share and collaborate with each other was extremely vital. It was important that the new environment would support the ability to share and access information internally as quick as possible," said Gouveia.

Backup and Recovery

To support a modern workplace, the customer needed ready access to systems and data. Compliance with data storage and backup regulations was key.

"Simply having on-site backup storage is no longer practical or modern. Upgrading to a modern workplace meant they needed technology that was simple, modern and efficient. Part of that meant moving to the cloud," outlined Gouveia.

"It's important to remember that a business cannot be a specialist in everything. Given their core business wasn't backups, they knew they needed an experienced partner like Data#3 to help."

The existing backup eco-system was a frustrating drain on the IT team's time. It required frequent intervention, and they sought a replacement that they could trust to do the job.

"The existing solution struggled to keep up with the growing demands of business. At Data#3 we know how important it is to have confidence in your technology with day to day business, and we needed to make sure that the new technology would do that," said Gouveia.

IT Outcome

With the new technology in place, the organisation undertook a digital transformation, with its ageing IT environment transformed into a simple, modern workplace with reliable and high-performance foundations.

Modern Workplace

With the support of Microsoft, skilled Data#3 specialists replaced the previous Exchange environment with Office 365 and updated the existing operating systems throughout the organisation to Windows 10. Intune and Microsoft security services were used to unify endpoint management and protect data. The solution followed the organisation's focus on secure, simplified and easily managed IT.

"There is consistency in simplification, so now they can provide users either a desktop or laptop with standard specifications; while keeping it simple. The organisation can then achieve things quickly by simplifying, and making sure they understand any exceptions," explained Gouveia.

Devices were built and deployed at the client site with minimal disruption, so that the organisation could continue focusing on upcoming high priority projects. The solution replaced existing systems and integrated into the overall network infrastructure. Aside from simplicity, improved management and introduction of a modern operating system prepared the IT team to ensure all security updates and patches are applied promptly.

"We knew it was important that the business didn't have any impact to their business, and if they weren't patching, the risk to business continuity could be severe."

The new intranet and EDRMS technology have been a key component in ensuring business continuity. The project has seen the creation and deployment of a digital depository where staff can seamlessly access all records through a new AvePoint Cloud Records and LiveTiles solution. The underpinning architecture was designed at the program level, incorporating key components from Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Azure with a focus on security, identity and collaboration.

"With the new technology in place, the organisation is now in a position to rapidly share communications across the entire business. It doesn't matter if it is a news update, an internal communication or helping ensure compliant record management, they now have confidence in their technology so they know their staff have the tools they need to keep going," said Gouveia.

Backup and Restore

Data#3 embarked on a design phase where they worked to identify what data was to be backed up and how it would be configured in the cloud. An innovative hybrid model was created that went beyond the initial brief, with Veeam's simple, flexible and reliable backup management deployed via iland, and handed over to the Data#3 Managed Services team. Opting for a managed service allowed the customer to increase focus on its core business.

The solution met the organisations requirements for simplicity, with a low cost and absolute reliability. 100% of backups have been successfully stored in the cloud and can be quickly restored if the need arises. A risk factor has been turned into an efficient solution with predictable costs.

Business Outcome

Originally, when the organisation recognised the need for a digital transformation, no one could have foreseen the state of emergency to be faced in the form of COVID-19. The new technology environments was quickly put to the test.

"For many organisations COVID-19 presented a number of concerns for business continuity. An organisation that has a modern workplace environment can ensure many of their staff are prepared and have the capability to work remotely whenever needed," said Gouveia.

Recognising that change of the workplace environment is often met with resistance, business leaders sought the help of a change management specialist, allowing him to focus on delivering the technology aspects of the SOE solution.

Staff across the organisation had been using the same technology for a decade and handling change did present some hurdles. Staff worked closely with Data#3 to ensure staff were empowered to use the new technology and the path to adoption of Windows 10 and Office 365 was smooth.

"Instrumental to the successful adoption of the new technology was that the organisation took it away from being just about IT, and made it an organisational matter. It is about enabling their people instead of trying to force change on their users. All users were taken on a journey, with corporate services within the organisation the champions of change," outlined Gouveia.

"Data#3's change consultant also assisted with communications and held us to good governance and discipline."

Understanding the importance of the human aspect and confident of the overall solution, slowed introduction of the SOE to six users per day, taking time to ensure each was comfortable with the new technology. The customer identified Office 365 champions throughout the organisation who had the skills to aid less confident users in the new features and applications available. Collaboration tools were especially valuable.

"We helped them with the introduction of Microsoft Teams, which is a collaboration-centric, modern way of working. They were moved from a siloed organisation, which was a big change. Some of their younger people then became involved in using collaboration tools, and helped changed the culture across the organisation," said Gouveia.

"The breakdown in siloes was significant. Microsoft Teams is intuitive, so users are just getting on board and collaborating extensively. It is all integrated, all the documents are there, they are sharing screens – it is very easy."

Conclusion

Like many organisations facing the impacts of COVID-19, the organisation has many challenges ahead, but the digital transformation they underwent for a modern workplace means their workers can perform their roles remotely when needed.

"As part of moving to Microsoft Intune, people can take their devices home and work securely there, which in the last few months has been the backbone of ensuring continuity of their business," asserted Gouveia.

Not only can staff now work remotely, they can collaborate from anywhere, in virtual meetings and on shared projects. With the improved collaboration environment key to their strategy vision, Microsoft Teams helps support an environment that puts knowledge management and decision making in the right areas.

The right partner was a key ingredient in a successful digital transformation and is invaluable to an organisation completing a complex task. Strong account management with a single point of contact helped to smooth the path.

"The complexity of transitioning to a modern workplace with the right back up can be daunting but working closely with a partner like Data#3 can help make your digital transformation journey simple," said Gouveia.

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