Knight Frank

Knight Frank revolutionises user experience with Microsoft DaaS program from Data#3

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Testimonial

"We knew from experience that Data#3 was a good technology partner, and from there it was about process and finance. Data#3 had the trust factor, the communication channels, and the resourcing, and we knew they could manage our workload nationally."

John Walton, Director,
Head of Service Delivery, Knight Frank.

Objective

After facing a range of support and system challenges that affected users, Knight Frank wanted to establish a device program that would equip their teams with modern technology while providing an efficient service and excellent value.

Approach

Most of Knight Frank's 1,000-strong workforce is accustomed to working on the go, so their laptop is a vital tool. The business had been working with multiple providers with inconsistent support and faced challenges resolving device servicing needs. The business was keen to maximise the benefits from its investment in Microsoft Intune, making its device service seamless for users and reducing touchpoints for the busy IT team.

Solutions & Services

- ☑ **Microsoft Surface**
- ☑ **Microsoft Intune**
- ☑ **Device as a Service**

Benefits

- • **Fast, efficient device provisioning process**

- • **Known point of contact for support**

- • **Reduced burden on IT staff**

- • **Improved user productivity**

Project Highlight

"Now that we have Microsoft Intune implemented, we can wipe and deploy machines anywhere with an internet connection. A complex and lengthy process has been replaced by a simple sequence that offers a greater experience to our end users."

John Walton, Director,
Head of Service Delivery, Knight Frank.

Data#3 Customer Story

Knight Frank

"With Data#3, we know they have the right communication channels, we get the advantage of having local support for our offices across Australia, all backed by the global expertise of Microsoft."

John Walton, Director, Head of Service Delivery, Knight Frank.

The Background

Knight Frank Australia is part of a global consultancy that has been matching families and businesses with their perfect properties for more than 125 years. The 1,000-strong Australian team works from 20 offices around the country, and prides itself on combining innovation, industry knowledge and traditional service to give clients the best possible outcome.

As frustration grew from dealing with support challenges from multiple vendors, the IT team was keen to consolidate their supplier list to a single provider that could offer more personalised support that the business needed. By choosing a consistent device type designed to work well in a Microsoft environment, a smoother, more efficient experience could be offered to users.

The Challenge

Knight Frank's IT team is dedicated to providing customers and colleagues with a high-quality service. To achieve this, they strive to continually improve processes and work as efficiently as possible. Providing users with reliable, appropriate laptops empowers them to work at their best, but Director, Head of Service Delivery, John Walton, said that the device program in place had proven to be problematic.

"This came about as we sought greater asset control, and also for better security and business continuity."

Working with multiple device types from two different vendors had led to a number of support challenges. Aside from the cost of running multiple systems, the IT team found itself spending additional time troubleshooting and managing device issues, which took time away from other important tasks.

"We experienced frustration. Especially when it comes to service delivery, we need quick, responsive action. We had situations where people were without a functional laptop for a couple of days – this was a big part of the experience – this needed to change" explained Walton.

Deploying new devices had been another bugbear in the past, with both IT team and users taking more time than they would like to transition data and applications to a new machine.

"Our aim is to keep things simple, keep staff happy, and provide a device that's ready to go," outlined Walton.

Support coverage was important also as many Knight Frank offices do not have IT staff on-site to deal with new deployments or the day-to-day management of devices. This had proved difficult in the past in situations where no local support was available, with pandemic-related restrictions amplifying the limitation of the previous arrangement. Repairs were on occasion untenably slow.

"We've experienced delays of up to a month and a half to get one user's device fixed, which significantly impacts our team's productivity."

IT Outcome

Data#3's Device as a Service (DaaS) includes device procurement bundled with a choice of services, such as deployment and management services, analytics, security and eventual end of life recycling. Companies choose a length of service, typically three years and pay a consistent monthly cost per device.

Knight Frank opted for a full device as a service (DaaS) and modern management, including a detailed rollout schedule and support agreement. This would give users modern, well-maintained Microsoft Surface devices while minimising touchpoints for the busy IT team.

"We looked at the offerings from three providers, following our acquisition process. We knew from experience that Data#3 was a good technology partner, and from there it was about process and finance. Data#3 had the trust factor, the communication channels, and the resourcing, and we knew they could manage our workload nationally," commented Walton.

"We are juggling time zones, resources, and capacity for 20 offices nationally and Data#3 has that national coverage. It's critical that our devices were being as well controlled as possible in every location, with us leveraging Data#3 resources to sites where we have no direct IT staff."

Another important factor was Data#3's partnership with Microsoft. Knight Frank had invested in several Microsoft technologies and sought to gain maximum value from this commitment.

"We looked at what leverage Data#3 had in terms of their partnership with Microsoft, and this was a big factor. From there, Data#3 assigned a dedicated team member to help us build our environment from start to finish which was most beneficial," said Walton.

"We were attracted to Microsoft Surface devices because we are a very heavy Microsoft-focussed organisation. Their hardware leverages modern technology and is designed to fully integrate with Microsoft security features. Security is a huge aspect for us – and we knew that Microsoft Intune would work best with our devices, leading to a lower chance of issues. We didn't have the same integration worries that can crop up, and we knew that Microsoft software always plays well with Microsoft hardware."

The combination of Data#3 and Microsoft proved to make deployment a less stressful experience, and Walton said that users are efficiently transferred onto their new Microsoft Surface devices and quickly enjoying the benefits.

"Before deploying the devices, we heavily pushed Microsoft Teams and Microsoft OneDrive across the business, and this helped make the rollout seamless. Consolidating where staff kept their date definitely minimised complications and increased our ability to support staff remotely, reducing the need for such a heavy office IT presence."

"Our teams appreciate the new system; the feedback has been very positive about how seamless the process is now."

**John Walton, Director,
Head of Service Delivery, Knight Frank.**

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"We have the backing of a team of Data#3 resources that can be deployed where they are needed and know they will provide a good service."

John Walton, Director, Head of Service Delivery, Knight Frank.

Business Outcome

True to the IT team's aim of providing the best service to users, the process of receiving an updated machine, and of seeking help, has been made more efficient.

"This time, there has been zero manual work for the user in getting their device set up. They just need their username, password, and to sit tight for a few minutes. Now that we have Microsoft inTune implemented, we can wipe and deploy machines anywhere with an internet connection. A complex and lengthy process has been replaced by a simple sequence that offers a greater experience to our end users."- recounted Walton.

"Our teams appreciate the new system; the feedback has been very positive about how seamless the process is now."

For the IT team, knowing that any support needs can be ably handled by Data#3 specialists means that they can concentrate on their important work of guiding the business through digital transformation. Walton said that knowing user devices are well-managed is a critical element of security at a time when cybercrime is a highly challenging issue in the property industry.

"It has been much easier to deploy further application and Microsoft updates using Microsoft Intune, and we know that updates are pushed out to devices within seven days of release."

The cost benefits, too, have been notable, with the Knight Frank team still counting the savings.

"A big part of why it is cost-efficient has been our ability to reduce the number of systems required to maintain our legacy fleet of devices. Once we are 100% deployed, which we are really close to, we will be able to shut down other systems reducing our expenditure even further and we'll have the added assurance of knowing that we have modern devices at our disposal," explained Walton.

"Once complete, the entire onboarding process for staff will be simplified as we train people on the same standard operating environment (SOE) nationally. It adds up in an environment of 20 offices."

Conclusion

As one of the most trusted names in the property sector, Knight Frank knows the importance of good relationships in business. Just as they put enormous effort into building relationships with their own customers, they value the same in their suppliers. Knowing who they were dealing with and having a dedicated contact has saved the IT team from the time-consuming process of chasing down support after explaining the same issue to multiple staff as they get passed around from person to person.

"With Data#3, we know they have the right communication channels, we get the advantage of having local support for our offices across Australia, all backed by the global expertise of Microsoft," outlined Walton.

"If a device is damaged, we just raise a ticket with Data#3, and they take responsibility from there. We have the backing of a team of Data#3 resources that can be deployed where they are needed and know they will provide a good service."

Data#3 Customer Story

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Data#3 and Microsoft

Since 1994, Data#3 has combined forces with Microsoft to help our customers adapt and grow. Today, we are Microsoft's largest Australian business partner with the highest level of competency across the Microsoft ecosystem. Our hundreds of accredited consultants are ready to help our customers deliver the digital future; from enhancing productivity and collaboration with Microsoft 365 and the latest Surface devices, to transforming business processes with Dynamics 365, to ensuring our customers get the most value from Azure cloud. Our scale and expertise enable our unparalleled support to customers selecting, deploying, managing and securing Microsoft applications, products and devices.

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