

Data#3 Customer Story

Cisco Flex EA delivers collaboration advantage with Data#3 Customer Success program



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Partner

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Objective

A primary industry organisation wanted to simplify management of its Cisco renewals and improve collaboration options available for its staff.

Project Highlight

Improved collaboration for all users who can now seamlessly transition between Cisco Webex meetings and Microsoft Teams meetings.

Benefits

- Simplified Cisco procurement with predictable pricing
- Users can create, join, and manage Cisco Webex and Microsoft Teams meetings anytime, anywhere
- User guides and self-paced training easily accessed by users
- Simplified license and contract management via the Data#3's Lifecycle 360 platform.

Approach

Data#3 had worked with the organisation previously on a number of projects that highlighted their Cisco and Microsoft specialisations. Data#3 understood what was required and their highly regarded Customer Success practice also offered access to Cisco collaboration experts, making it an easy decision to enlist their help.

Solutions & Services

- ✓ Cisco Flex Enterprise Agreement
- ✓ Cisco Webex
- ✓ Lifecycle 360

The Background

As an organisation in the primary industry, prioritising sustainability and quality in its operations is a must. The organisation's head office had recently begun a rapid adoption of Microsoft Teams to enable staff to work from home in the wake of COVID-19, but it presented integration challenges with Cisco Webex.

As corporate staff were required to hastily transition to remote working their reliance on Cisco's Software Support Service increased. So, when it reached end of life, the organisation knew there would be significant risk to business continuity if they didn't ensure continued support.

The Challenge

The organisation has long depended on robust technology from Cisco to support the business in both corporate and operational environments. This extends from core networking and infrastructure through to collaboration tools and support leveraging Cisco's Software Support Service.

Given the extensive history the organisation had with Cisco technology, sticking with the familiar was preferred to ensure seamless collaboration not only in the Australian offices, but the many offices they held around the world.

When they opened their new Australian offices, the organisation's dedicated in-house IT team took the opportunity to use some of the latest Cisco collaboration tools to create an exceptional user experience.

The result was a modern, sleek collaboration environment that showcased the organisation's desire to be the best in every facet of its business. Smart use of technology is at the heart of their drive to deliver optimal results through efficiency and quality performance.

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, the challenges of supporting a complex, multi-site business grew. Until then, most users had worked on-site, with a smaller number working from home via Cisco Webex. Like most businesses, they were forced to quickly support their entire workforce to work remotely. To ensure the wider business was supported, the decision was made from the global head office to adopt Microsoft Teams, due to the rapid roll out that was needed. This led to integration challenges at a time when the IT team was already extremely busy supporting a now mostly remote workforce.

With their Cisco Collaboration Software Support Service approaching end of life, the organisation had started discussions with Data#3 about their next step. Key stakeholders had identified that managing renewals could be time-consuming, and they were keen to drive value and efficiency. As a Cisco Gold Partner with Cisco Master Specialisation and Microsoft Gold partner, Data#3 was already the organisation's supplier of Cisco equipment and Microsoft licensing for the last decade which made it easy to know who to turn to for advice.

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Business Outcome

Data#3 proposed a Cisco Flex Enterprise Agreement (EA) that would not only simplify the management of the collaboration software portfolio, but offer other significant benefits around growth and future proofing of the solution. Additionally, the EA would include access to Data#3's Customer Success program. This program includes adoption and enablement support from certified Cisco specialists, as well as consumption and adoption monitoring, regular technology health checks, and a host of benefits within a tailored success plan for the business. This additional support proved invaluable for the organisation as they ironed out integration challenges.

Where users had previously switched between Webex and Microsoft Teams as they moved between different meetings, the transition is now effortless, and they don't need to adjust between different features and functionality.

The biggest benefit is that it made the transition to the new office and systems straightforward. Staff are now able to go from meetings in Microsoft Teams directly into Webex meetings seamlessly.

Previous limitations in a closed environment where the organisation could only leverage Cisco endpoints for meetings were no longer a barrier to collaboration. The new solution equips staff with the integration needed to book meetings from Microsoft Teams while accessing the same meeting on the Webex platform with the click of a single button.

Along with the Customer Success program, the organisation had been using Data#3's Lifecycle 360 platform since its early development. Lifecycle 360 offers extraordinary visibility of their IT environment. Updated via direct integration with Cisco's systems, Lifecycle 360 provides near real time insights into Cisco hardware, licensing and support and offers a centralised view of agreements with other vendors. It alerts IT departments to upcoming renewal needs, and, supported by a team of annuity specialists, it helps organisations to consolidate their renewals to make them more manageable and cost-effective.

Conclusion

The investment the organisation had already made in building strong, reliable systems put them in a good position in the early days of the pandemic, so they were able to adapt to the demands of working from home without stressing about the underlying infrastructure.

As an organisation that required a lot of travel interstate, the border closures could have proved to be significantly problematic for the business. However, their forward thinking and planning meant they still had the Cisco video conferencing units to do everything remotely. Their investment in technology meant at a time with unprecedented change impacting every aspect of day-to-day life, they were well positioned for success.

Still, adjusting to a new collaboration platform was challenging for a small number of staff unaccustomed to working remotely, and with the benefit of time additional change management to support users would prove valuable.

As equally important as it is to make sure technology supports your businesses evolving needs, it's also important to help your teams get up to speed with new technology to really maximise the investment in technology. Through a committed partnership, the in-house technical team has developed deep expertise across Cisco's portfolio, a service that gives Data#3 an edge when it comes to solving business challenges with the best technology solutions.

Data#3 and Cisco

As a Cisco Gold and Master Specialised Partner, Data#3's relationship with Cisco has grown progressively over more than 20 years. During this time, Data#3 has become one of Cisco's largest partner in Asia Pacific with significant capacity throughout Australia and the capability to deliver business outcomes using Cisco's technology.

Through a committed partnership, our technical team has developed deep expertise across Cisco's portfolio, giving Data#3 an edge when it comes to navigating the complexity of the digital era and solving your business challenges with the best technology solutions.

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