

Case Study: The Move to Remote Working

Overview

Our client is one of the largest financial institutions in Australia, employing more than 30,000 people across Australia, New Zealand and Asia.

With the new social distancing laws that were enforced to combat the global Coronavirus pandemic, our client, like many other firms, was faced with the challenge of providing remote working capabilities to its large employee base and ensuring that critical banking services were operational and being run in an efficient manner.

Having the tools, the technology platform, the backend support systems and the processes in place that can accommodate such a huge shift in the working regime, required foresight and a multi-year program of work that delivered on the client's "work from anywhere" agenda.

Our client's ability to successfully navigate the changing landscape was a result of the progress they had made on Workplace Transformation journey – which included implementing their 'cloud-first', 'anytime, anywhere, any device' and 'insourcing' strategies:

- Moving the workplace and collaboration tools to the cloud (Microsoft O365), thereby enabling easy remote access.
- Availability of scalable security solutions (Z-scanner on the new Win10 fleet) that could be leveraged in a timely manner to enable remote working.

- Having a scalable, robust video conferencing solution in place for the enterprise (Zoom) that could accommodate the large spike in VC meetings.
- Having the processes and support teams in place (in-house) that proved vital in ensuring that business facing roles (bankers) were provided with appropriate 'tools of trade' in a timely manner.

colB solution and benefits

colB has been a critical delivery partner, leading the client's workplace transformation journey, right from its inception about three years ago. colB led a team of delivery and migration specialists that implemented a number of initiatives that were key enablers in the client's 'remote working' journey:

1. Deployment of the O365 collaboration toolsets (eg Exchange Online, OneDrive, Teams, Planner and SharePoint Online)
 - This covered the migration of more than 35,000 user mailboxes, Meeting Room resources and shared mailboxes to the cloud. Teams/Sharepoint Online enablement allowed staff to self-migrate their on-premise shared network drives to O365.

These migrations enabled access to emails, data and files without a VPN service. Microsoft's Multi factor authentication capabilities also allowed staff to access emails and files on their mobile devices without the need for the traditional Airwatch Mobile Device Management (MDM) platform. These tools simplified the end user experience and made remote working easier.

2. Teams Audio Calling for staff, which proved valuable in the COVID environment, with Teams audio call usage increasing by ~70%.
3. Teams B2B Guest Access was enabled with appropriate Data Loss Prevention (DLP) and security controls to extend the benefits of real-time collaboration features between staff and trusted external parties (when previously this was only allowed between staff).

The colB team played a pivotal role in all aspects of the O365 deployment – this included securing the regulatory (APRA) endorsement for moving material workloads to the cloud, implementing all the foundational security controls and capabilities required for the migration, leading a team of change and migration specialists to ensure seamless end user transition and adoption.

As a continued trusted partner for the client, colB is now working on migrating the SharePoint on-premise sites and content to SharePoint Online.

- Build out of the Win10 capability (image build, deployment options), as well as the testing and remediation of over 500 applications against Win10. Ensuring that the client was Win10 ready was critical as it enabled the rapid rollout of the zScaler remote access platform.
- Design, build and rollout of an enterprise level video conferencing tool (Zoom). colB led this initiative from the tool/vendor selection stage,

through design and regulatory approval and then deployment across 35,000 users. colB was also instrumental in setting up the ongoing operational teams and processes to ensure the successful running of the service inhouse. Having a robust and scalable video conferencing solution that could handle the increased workloads ensured that critical banking services were still being delivered efficiently.

- Leading a large scale, complex insourcing program – where the client brought the support and maintenance of a number of the core foundational workplace capabilities back in house. For example, Tech Lounge (Drop in Service Desk), which played a vital role in the distribution and set up of Win10 laptops and remote access capability across the enterprise. colB managed and led the insourcing program, which took nine months to deliver. Apart from supporting the client's remote access agenda, this initiative also delivered significant operational cost savings.

colB insights

The client's ability to adapt to remote working for its large employee base in a short timeframe was not delivered overnight – the client's strategy and focus to deliver on its Workplace transformation agenda went a long way in setting the client up for success in the COVID-19 environment.

Change and adoption activities played a significant role in ensuring that employees were using the new 'tools of trade' efficiently. A lot of organisations tend to invest and focus mainly on the deployment and migration activities. Continued effort on adoption activities are equally important in order to achieve the uptake targets.