MODERN WORKPLACE

quorum

Managing migration with a Public Sector body.

It's not always easy for businesses to remain ahead of the curve, and January 14th, 2020 marked the date that Windows 7 came to its End of Life phase. In practical terms, this meant that Microsoft would no longer provide patches, updates, automatic fixes or online support for any security concerns associated with Windows 7. As a result, businesses still running Windows 7 were forced to address the operational and security risks that this situation presented.
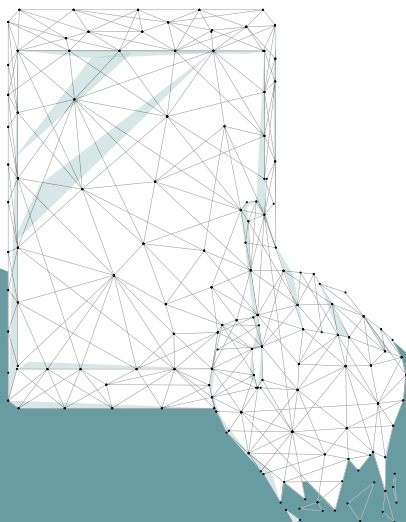
Our client, a public sector body, faced that very problem, as it wasn't an option to run its systems on an unsupported platform. Rather than investing significant sums in extended support with no progress towards a long-term solution, they chose to migrate to Windows 10, enabling productivity and innovation while also keeping their business secure.

Our Customer

As a public facing organisation our client has a strong reputation to uphold both domestically and internationally.

They value their progressive methods of operation, their emphasis on exceptional customer service, and enabling their employees in a modern workplace. Using the correct tools means that they can retain their standing as a trusted public entity, while ensuring their workplace remains modern and secure.

In order to uphold these principles, it was vital for our client to achieve a seamless transition from Windows 7 to Windows 10. Additionally, the seasonal nature of their business means there are only certain windows throughout the calendar year during which substantial change can be implemented without upsetting their annual work.

The Challenges

As well as the time-sensitive nature of the transition, our client also had a number of other specifications for the tender. These included the following key points:

- Updating the golden image for Windows 10 (including achieving compliance with NCSC guidelines).

- Application discovery and packaging.

- Deployment of the new One Drive for Business (ODfB) solution.

- Creation of a new Ivanti platform in Glasgow to mirror the existing Edinburgh installation.

- A full review and partial restructuring of their Active Directory environment.

- The physical migration of 1,300 devices from Windows 7 to Windows 10.

Our client selected Quorum as the ideal candidate for this programme of work based on our excellent track record of delivering large- and small-scale workplace modernisation projects combined with our significant experience with the Microsoft stack. Additionally, our expertise in the field of Identity and Access Management (IAM) was of further benefit, as we could also fulfil our client's desire to restructure their Active Directory environment at the same time.

The Solution and Outcome

This project was successfully delivered by marrying our technical competencies with our strong project management governance framework. We managed the full scope of the project, including all client activities, as well as our multiskilled team throughout the full lifecycle of the project. The project was delivered efficiently, provided transparency for the client and ultimately enabled us to deliver a successful outcome which fully satisfied their requirements.

The first stage of the application packaging process consisted of a discovery phase, which allowed us to confirm all of the existing in-scope applications and draw up a viable approach to their packaging in the subsequent phase. By categorising all apps by complexity, we were able to determine the activities necessary for the completion of the package and prioritise them in terms of urgency, thus enabling maximum throughput from the packaging team while still delivering complex and business critical applications first.

While our client had begun to rollout OneDrive to a limited number of users, Quorum worked alongside the client team to engineer a phased rollout to the entirety of the organisation. This was achieved with support from our client's Communications Department, who provided vital awareness and guidance to end users prior to any action being taken. This resulted in a seamless rollout wherein individual users were rarely called upon to undertake any action of their own and all end user data migrated safe and securely to the Cloud.

The first 'completed' delivery of the programme was the deployment of an Ivanti instance in Glasgow to mirror the platform that already existed in Edinburgh. While the creation and commissioning of this platform was relatively straightforward, we created a detailed plan for its deployment. This early success brought the client and Quorum teams closer together and forged a deeper understanding that would stand us in good stead for the rest of the project.

Although not directly related to the migration from Windows 7 to Windows 10, our client decided to take advantage of the tender process to incorporate a review of the Active Directory environment into their scheduled maintenance. As specialists in IAM, Quorum was able to undertake the review, working with our client to enact the agreed changes and improving the stability and resilience of their Active Directory estate.

The upgrading and deployment of 1,300 devices is a significant undertaking and Quorum built a comprehensive rollout model to achieve this with optimal user experience in mind. Measures were taken to ensure end user experience was seamless and we worked to a deployment schedule to ensure a consistent experience that would not impact whole teams at any one time. This model resulted in a dynamic modern workplace and a highly positive user experience overall.

The Summary

Navigating the migration from Windows 7 to Windows 10 represents a major challenge for any organisation, but the unique nature of the work undertaken by our client made their situation even more difficult. Partnering with Quorum allowed them access to a highly skilled and multi-disciplined team of industry professionals, who provided indispensable assistance in planning, prioritising, advising and delivering a complex programme of work.

As a direct result of our approach, we helped to reduce risk for the duration of the project while simultaneously meeting the deadline for all work to be completed. This means that our client now has all of its devices functioning on the correct operating system, without incurring any expense for additional support premiums or any impact on its seasonal business. As an additional benefit, our client's Active Directory now enjoys a greater degree of stability and the body is equipped with a roadmap of future recommended enhancements, resulting in one very satisfied customer.