Management, automation and security in a single software layer
at Brisbane Catholic Education

With over 65,000 devices under management, Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) needed to streamline provisioning and management of its equipment and application stack. The introduction of a VMware Workspace ONE with Windows 10 Modern Management footprint is enabling it to retain operational efficiency and better align student outcomes to success in the digital workplace.

Brisbane Catholic Education oversees 147 schools and 72,000 students across all education levels, and manages the full-time administration and teaching staff in each school.

THE CHALLENGE

BCE's IT teams were manually deploying and provisioning devices for new students at the start of every school term. The environment included iPads, MacBooks and Windows PCs running different applications, configurations and operating systems. The team had to individually list IP addresses for Apple ID registration, upload virtual images onto Windows and MacOS devices, and negotiate limited bandwidth while manually registering each machine.

With no central device management platform in place, average deployment phases took weeks to complete and consumed unsustainable amounts of labour and resources.

Paul Saltmarsh, Senior IT Officer at BCE says: "There were weeks where we did nothing else but manually deploy

thousands of devices across our 147 sites. The process could take more than 40 minutes per device, plus having to log into each device to manually install required applications and folders. It really sapped our team's time and energy."

This digital complexity and inefficiency continued to the classrooms. Vikesh Anand, IT Manager at St Dympna's Catholic Primary School, one of the BCE schools, says: "More than ten minutes of each lesson would be spent logging students in, with missing applications or device issues often disrupting classes. These distractions, coupled with frequent shifts between device and OS types across the course of their learning, really affected students' focus and their enthusiasm to learn."

The lack of visibility over the entire device stack also impeded BCE's aim to nurture an 'always-on' learning mindset within their secondary student cohort. Tony Bear, IT Business Manager at Chisholm Catholic College, BCE, says: "We wanted the older students to be able to take their devices home - to help both with schoolwork and to promote a sense of responsibility

"We needed a more cost-effective, sustainable and scalable provisioning method that wouldn't burn out our IT teams. VMware and Workspace ONE are now the stable foundation for our environment. We've been able to really raise the quality of our education practice."

Paul Saltmarsh
Senior IT Officer
Brisbane Catholic Education

THE CHALLENGE

BCE needed to reduce the complexity of manually deploying and provisioning student technologies for its 147 sites. Lack of visibility into its device and application stack made management and security a challenge.

THE SOLUTION

Brisbane Catholic Education deployed a VMware's Workspace ONE solution for its ability to provision different device ecosystems and its application array from a unified, cloud-powered console. The solution placed management, automation and security on a single software layer for BCE.

THE BENEFITS

- Secure set up and assigning of devices with new IDs within hours instead of weeks
- Automated provisioning and management of devices and application stacks, saving time for teachers, students and staff
- Visibility, control and security of Workspace ONE
- Significant costs savings from CompNow negotiated pricing

THE PRODUCTS

- VMware Workspace ONE with Apple & Windows 10 Modern Management

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in their ownership. But to successfully do so, we had to have a management system that allowed us to virtually set user permissions, while also giving students the freedom to navigate through the web, knowing they would be supported by our team if and when needed."

THE SOLUTION

CompNow has a long established and far reaching relationship with BCE, as well as with the majority of individual schools within its network.

For this project, CompNow was instrumental in the technology selection and pricing negotiations for not only the core VMware component but also the NBN, Microsoft and JAMF layers. CompNow's strong position in the marketplace was exemplified by the VMware pricing it achieved for BCE - which was lower than any finalised anywhere in the world and took into account BCE's future expansion needs.

CompNow's engineering teams from Melbourne and Sydney were heavily involved in the design and rollout of BCE's new environment. This extended to an intensive 5-day training program for BCE's IT team on deployment in a school environment.

As BCE's trusted partner, CompNow advised in the selection of VMware's Workspace ONE solution. It was to be implemented for its ability to provision different device ecosystems and application stacks from a unified, cloud-powered console. The solution placed management, automation and security on a single software layer for BCE. And the Workspace ONE console enables the secure set up and assignment of devices to new IDs within hours instead of weeks, irrespective of their OS or model.

Since the rollout of the Workspace ONE solution, BCE has largely automated its provisioning and management of devices and application stacks. After minimal configuration, the solution now automatically updates or reassigns devices to student or staff IDs as they progress through their academic years, along with the relevant applications, coursework and software – often with little input from IT teams.

Paul says: "This saw a huge leap in efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Devices are ready to go, out-of-the-box, with folders and applications relevant to a student's level automatically spinning up once they log into their Workspace ONE Intelligent Hub."

BENEFITS

The ability to seamlessly target and deploy applications or configurations for selected devices or age groups has opened new possibilities for BCE's educators. As one early example, the education body has successfully trialled and executed 'zero-touch' deployments of digital examinations and NAPLAN assessments throughout their secondary schools – without recalling or reconfiguring a single device.

The comprehensive visibility, control and security of Workspace ONE has also convinced BCE to discontinue several costly incumbent solutions, freeing up significant budget. Paul says: "With VMware, we can keep our IT team operation lean and agile, without compromising the performance and security that form the vital foundation of our sustained push for greater integration of technology and learning."

By providing higher visibility over all devices and applications, Workspace ONE has also given BCE a more confident security stance. "If any device is stolen or compromised, we can remotely wipe the device, ensuring compliance with data protection laws," he says. "We can now engage in meaningful conversations with our students about usage and security of data - get them to think about how they use their devices and how they can safeguard themselves as they transition from school into the workforce."

Vikesh says: "The level of automation is invaluable for me as I single-handedly oversee the 800 devices used by our students. Workspace ONE has freed me to explore better ways to help our teachers use technology in their lessons. And small changes, like standardising the layout for Workspace ONE Hub, has birthed co-teaching initiatives that see older students supporting their peers – fostering collaboration and feedback skills that are essential for future ways of work."

"We've introduced We want to give our educators and students a conducive and frictionless digital environment in which students and teachers can they can explore and build essential those digital skills. ," Paul says. "All students can now focus on learning in their digital environment rather than the technicalities of their device."