

ONECLOUD IT SOLUTIONS SHIFTS **MIRAIT TECHNOLOGIES TO THE CLOUD**

Windows Virtual Desktop solution delivered from Azure brings advantages of cloud-based computing while maintaining legacy and custom applications.

MIRAIT Technologies Australia is a national telecommunications and ICT infrastructure construction and maintenance provider, operating from five locations across the eastern seaboard. With more than 160 staff and an extensive network of contractors the company found itself with the need to update its I.T. infrastructure.

MIRAIT had on-premise infrastructure centrally located in its head office which was presenting several challenges. The infrastructure was aging and would need investment in both hardware and software to maintain key business applications. At the same time it was difficult to ensure staff in other locations had a consistent experience since outside of NSW not all infrastructure was available to all locations and link speed and congestion had a negative impact on operations. The centrally-located infrastructure also represented a business risk, both from a security and redundancy viewpoint.

Craig McLaren, Operations Manager for OneCloud IT, says MIRAIT desired a consistent experience for staff no matter where they were located, and wished to have only a single system to support and provide training on. The nature of MIRAIT's work meant the ability to mobilise their workforce while ensuring they could have the same experience whether they were in the office or working remotely, made a cloud solution the logical choice.

"MIRAIT had already moved to reduce its reliance on on-premise infrastructure, shifting to Office 365 for email, and using Microsoft teams and Sharepoint, and we'd been in discussions about taking this further. The move to remote working when the Coronavirus pandemic arrived was an additional factor to push the business case for a full cloud solution forward," says McLaren.



DEFINING THE SOLUTION

McLaren says MIRAIT's desire to make the shift to an Azure-based cloud environment was complicated by the need to run custom line of business (LOB) applications which were dependent on the on-premises infrastructure.

"We did R&D around putting key LOB applications into a terminal services solution to make sure they worked while architecting the solution to work out how to migrate and then keep in sync several terabytes of data which would be changing frequently."

The solution chosen was a Windows Virtual Desktop (WVD) based in Azure to provide a full desktop experience to staff no matter where they were located. The WVD solution meant users would have a full Windows 10 experience for a seamless transition from their existing desktops, including compatibility with existing software. OneCloud had to ensure the solution scaled, both in terms of users and performance, and ensuring the various custom apps and security requirements functioned on a Windows 10 Terminal Server.

"The solution essentially moves MIRAIT's existing applications from an on-premise infrastructure to a cloud-based one in Azure," says McLaren. "Many businesses like MIRAIT have substantial investment in legacy and custom apps developed in house which limits their ability to migrate to SaaS-native applications. By hosting these legacy and custom apps in Azure MIRAIT is able to get the major benefits they were seeking from a cloud architecture, with minimal complications or impact on their business operations."

Shifting data from traditional client-server apps into the cloud also gives businesses a pathway to migrate to a fully SaaS application in the future when the time is right.

The WVD solution gives MIRAIT greater flexibility to scale as the need arises. With an extensive network of contractors working on projects the ability to add and remove users to the systems quickly and deploy WVD to them wherever they are brings enhanced flexibility to business operations.

Damian Shaddock, managing director One Cloud Solution IT, says that working closely with Ingram Micro enabled them to push their boundaries and assisted them to architect and deliver a solution to meet MIRAIT's needs.

"Their extensive training and support services ensured our technicians had the knowledge, and hands on expertise to confidently perform a migration of this size. Utilising Ingram's Cloud Marketplace provided us the ability to seamlessly provision resources, and deliver enhanced subscription management."

TESTING & DEPLOYMENT

To test that the system would perform as required and fulfil the functions MIRAiT needed, a User Acceptance Testing (UAT) environment was set up and key users across various departments were used to test and refine the solution.

Once the client signed off on the project OneCloud set up and deployed the production system in just three weeks. This was achieved without any downtime required from MIRAiT providing an almost seamless transition between the old system and the new Azure-based WVD solution.

"MIRAiT has a significant number of staff working from home who now have a unified solution, with the same experience from home that they would have in the office," says McLaren.

"The Azure-based WVD solution also has significant cost savings. The same level of scalability and redundancy that this solution brings would come with significant up-front and ongoing costs for a business of this size if it was a traditional client-server solution. With this Azure solution, they have business continuity in their apps, gain increased flexibility, scalability and redundancy, and it comes at a reduced cost compared to the traditional client-server based implementation they had been using," says McLaren.

"We didn't have a single issue on the first day of launch, from a user base of more than 150 users. It was a very successful implementation," says Andrew Lutterbeck, Executive General Manager Strategy & Business at MIRAiT.

"With any wholesale architecture change or organisation-wide deployment teething issues are to be expected. Given the demanding timeframes imposed by MIRAiT every eventuality couldn't be tested, however internally confidence was high that OneCloud IT would be able to resolve any emergent issues, and as it turned out that was confidence well placed," he says.

