Agility through IT consolidation

Crowe Horwath New Zealand has the largest accounting, audit, tax and business advisory footprint in New Zealand. With 22 offices across the country and a substantial presence in more than 100 countries, Crowe Horwath pride themselves on being part of the community.

> "The Datacom team are great to work with, their level of professionalism and expertise round storage and data security is a big step forward for our business."

Phil Mulvey – **New Zealand CEO, Crowe Horwath**

Challenge

Crowe Horwath had a vision to operate as a truly national business by consolidating its IT platforms to provide common access to client records and services from any location. The 22 offices ran out of six business hubs throughout New Zealand, each with its own IT systems, localised support and no ability to share capacity or data. This produced an inefficient and costly use of IT resources, a lack of integration and no consistency across software packages.

The business couldn't tap into the potential from each region and had to regularly reskill its 600-plus staff. This impacted on client billing and job rotation, making the process inefficient, costly and the business less agile. Of the six business hubs, five were in need of new server systems and upgrades – an outsourcing model was the next logical step.

Solution

Datacom transitioned the six regional hubs to a single IT platform by migrating all existing systems to our cloud infrastructure as a service (IaaS) platform. It became apparent workload requirements would be different and the costs involved would change significantly – lead times were adjusted to suit.

Citrix and thin client were implemented to remove reliance on desktops and create a consistent experience across the organisation. Crowe Horwath sought to streamline its numerous accounting applications and Datacom provided its knowledge and experience to deal with the primary software vendor, APS.

Crowe Horwath can move work to where capacity or capability exists, allowing them to offer better and different services to their growing portfolio of clients, with greater control of IT spending.

A national, fully managed service desk was created to bring measurable delivery across all locations and services. The introduction of an external service desk required a different mindset, as staff were used to having IT support on site. Improvements are being made to make the desk more interactive and deliver faster solutions; both companies acknowledged that utilising this service has been a big learning curve for staff.

Results

- Server farms reduced by more than 50% after moving to Datacom cloud IaaS platform

- Built-in flexibility by removing redundant IT systems has enabled access to the latest technology and systems without additional expense

- APS databases reduced from six to one

- Crowe Horwath can scale up and down depending on business requirements and has improved customer experience

- Consistent and transparent service to staff regardless of location has enabled better resource sharing across the group

- Staff have guaranteed access to help by using Datacom's support services compared to the previous in-house situation

- Clear leadership lines have created stronger and more inclusive investment decisions rather than multiple individual views

> "The Datacom team are not just vendors. They are seen as an extension of us."

Matt Stark – **National IT Manager, Crowe Horwath**

Partnership

By working closely with key stakeholders and building solid relationships, Datacom has become a trusted partner of Crowe Horwath. Open collaboration with both IT and staff achieved the right solutions. Two-way due diligence allowed Crowe Horwath to understand our expertise and delivery capabilities, while we ensured we understood their business requirements.