FUJITSU

Case Study
ME Bank

»The Fujitsu team was of the highest quality and had the technical expertise and flexibility that the task demanded. They got to know our business and our users and felt like part of our team«

Kon Mellas, National Manager, IT Operations, ME Bank

The customer

Country: Australia
Industry: Financial Services
Founded: 1994
Employees: 900
Website: www.mebank.com.au

The challenge

ME Bank needed to replace its aging desktop environment. It wanted a more modern standard operating environment (SOE) that would enable automated application distribution and the ability to quickly roll out patches. User self-service as well as less overheads to manage was also a critical outcome of this project, reducing the burden on the IT team.

The solution

Following an exhaustive evaluation process, the company selected Fujitsu as its strategic partner for the project. Together, they designed, developed and deployed a new SOE based on Windows 7. A Citrix upgrade as well as a VDI proof of concept was also part of the scope.

The customer

ME Bank is a national bank based in Melbourne, Australia. Founded in 1994 it offers a full range of banking products including home and personal loans, saving deposits and transaction accounts. It is owned by 30 industry super funds and has over 300,000 customers.

The challenge

ME Bank used to rely on an old desktop computing platform that was not only approaching end-of-life but was costly to manage. Applications had to be installed manually on over 1,000 individual devices, making maintenance and support a huge drain on resources. The company wanted to introduce a more effective desktop environment and launched the 'end user computing project' to meet that objective.

"We needed a computing platform that would have more functionality, and be more easily managed and supported because the existing solution was out of date and relied too much on manual intervention," explains Kon Mellas, National Manager, IT Operations, ME Bank. "Our vision is to become a truly digital bank and part of that vision is to give our employees the tools they need and ensure they need to deliver a better digital experience to our customers."

With customer numbers rising and the company expanding, building a new desktop architecture was a high priority. As with any significant engagement, the bank conducted a thorough go to market process to ensure it made the right choice.

"We gathered requirements from across the company and used that information to go to market with an RFP," adds Mellas. "The chief criteria were technical ability, cultural fit and cost. After a comprehensive evaluation, we selected Fujitsu to be our SI to provide the standard operating environment (SOE) solution.

"We know how Fujitsu works and how professional the engineers are; this, combined with the competitive price, made it an easy choice."

The benefit

- Roaming profiles allow users to work effectively from any device, increasing productivity and flexibility
- Desktops now perform much faster and log-in times have improved dramatically
- Incidents and service requests have been reduced by two thirds, allowing the IT team to focus on more proactive support of ME IT customers
- More automation and self-service also relieves the burden on the IT team and provides end-users with a more seamless experience
- The company has avoided hundreds of thousands of dollars in support fees by moving to the new platform and avoided potential risks around security which is critical as a financial institution

Products and services

- Fujitsu Project Services

"We used to have a backlog of 300 incidents and Service Requests for the End User Computing team to address which we have got down to 50 at any one time. There's far less manual intervention and a lot more self-service which means we can be more proactive and I can redeploy resources," continues Mellas. "We have gone from a flaky, ill-defined and unreliable SOE to one that is more easily managed, secure and consistent. That makes everybody's lives easier, especially ME Bank end-users / staff."

The new environment is also helping control costs – Mellas estimates that if the company had continued using the old environment, it would have cost it hundreds of thousands of dollars in support fees. Instead, the bank has a stable, supportable environment that performs better and can be automatically updated without manual intervention.

"Users love it because everything is so much faster and logging in takes a fraction of the time it used to," comments Mellas. "It's just a much more enjoyable and productive environment to work in."

The solution

ME Bank and Fujitsu worked collaboratively to create a steering committee and working group which would design and develop the new SOE. Following a pilot process, this was then deployed to every device. To avoid disruption to the business, a strict timetable was employed which involved migrating the desktops overnight.

"In the course of three months we converted over 1,000 devices across seven locations and replaced 75 percent of the devices as part of the process," says Mellas. "Fujitsu was a critically important partner in that task and was also responsible for a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure pilot using thin clients for 100 users."

The biggest challenge for ME Bank and Fujitsu was ensuring the many specialist banking applications were compatible with the new SOE, some of which were still based on 16-bit code. Working together, they enabled the smooth transition of every element of business critical software. In total, over 140 applications were migrated to the new platform.

Mellas and his team then set about educating users on the new environment: "The transition was totally seamless but we needed to make users aware of the new functionality. For example, now there is a collection of applications on the desktop that can be automatically downloaded as and when needed. Users no longer have to call us to get the software."

The benefit

With the new desktop environment in place, users now have a roaming profile so they can effectively work from any computer, which in turn increases productivity. In addition, the increased stability has seen incidents and service requests reduced by two thirds, freeing the IT team to focus on adding proactive value rather than firefighting.

Conclusion

ME Bank is delighted with the success of the project and the fact that it has a higher-performing, lower-cost desktop solution that is empowering its workforce. As a result of how well the project was executed, it is considering other areas where Fujitsu might play a role.

"The Fujitsu team was of the highest quality with the technical expertise and flexibility this task demanded. They got to know our business and our users and honestly felt like part of our team," concludes Mellas.

"Given this success, we are looking at outsourcing opportunities and handing the responsibility of managing the environment over to Fujitsu."
Kon Mellas, National Manager, IT Operations, ME Bank