FUJITSU

Enabling productive remote working during the pandemic

The Department of Conservation (DOC) partnered with Fujitsu in a drive to make its cloud-first vision a reality, enabling remote working, for which Fujitsu developed an Amazon Web Services (AWS) workspace build. The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, brought new urgency to the deployment as all staff were required to work from home. Fujitsu deployed 1,700 AWS workspaces in just five days to ensure DOC workers could remain productive.

About the customer

New Zealand's DOC, known as Te Papa Atawhai in Māori, is the public sector department charged with the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historical heritage. It was formed in 1987 to integrate some functions of the Department of Lands and Survey, the Forest Service and the Wildlife Service. DOC is responsible for about eight million hectares of native forests, alpine areas, wetlands, estuaries, lakes and islands.

Industry: **Public Sector**　　　Location: **New Zealand**　　　People: **3,500+**　　　Web: **doc.govt.nz**

Challenge

DOC had engaged Fujitsu to drive its cloud-first strategy and develop an AWS workspace build for remote working. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the deployment had to be accelerated to enable working from home.

Solution

- Windows 10 AWS workspace VDI in the cloud

Outcomes

- 1,700 new AWS workspaces delivered in five days
- New modern cloud managed desktop delivered from outside the network, directly from the factory
- Staff have the vital tools they need to work from home during a global pandemic

Enabling seamless remote working

DOC is a dispersed organisation, with 130 locations spread across New Zealand and up to 3,500 employees – many of whom work in remote areas, over limited bandwidth. DOC has pursued a 'cloud-first' strategy for the last five years to support remote working across different networks with the ability to scale with demand.

The strategy was built around moving workloads to the cloud, to not only take advantage of the 'cloud as a service' model, and the benefits of moving to an OPEX based model for infrastructure costs, but also to move to remote working as a priority in the architecture and design.

As a long-term partner, Fujitsu had already migrated 300 virtual servers to AWS EC2, with 350 AWS workspaces, as part of this cloud-first journey. Since this point Fujitsu has provided optimised cloud managed services from its DevOps cloud engineering team, working in partnership with DOC and Amazon Web Services. Over time, the fleet of workspaces had grown to around 1,600 since the initial migration. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck in early 2020, the project took on a new urgency. DOC staff were not classed as essential workers and so had to work from home, which meant DOC and Fujitsu had little time to scale out its Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) platform to over 3,500 users.

Superfast deployment via automation

Working in close partnership with AWS, the team determined they could immediately and efficiently deploy the Windows 10 build from the existing proof of concept and scale capacity to accommodate the target of 1,700 workspaces. Automation for this task was essential; AWS has a vast and well supported set of application programme interfaces (APIs) that allow full programmability of all its services. Fujitsu has multiple skilled DevOps engineers who were able to create scripts to build quickly inside the AWS environment.

Workspace builds were limited to 50 at a time, allowing time to check and verify that each build had no errors. During the workspace deployment, DOC ordered 2,000 Lenovo laptops to replace old hardware so that all staff had a DOC device.

"I consider the Fujitsu team to be a key partner in conservation in New Zealand," says Mike Edginton, CIO at DOC. "With its understanding of our business, and its knowledge of new technologies, Fujitsu was able to deliver a great outcome for us: 1,700 new workspaces in five days, while building a new modern cloud managed desktop that had to be delivered from outside the network, directly from the factory."

"AWS workspaces ensured secure and scalable access to our infrastructure, which proved invaluable. It could not have been done without the support of Fujitsu."

Mike Edginton, CIO, Department of Conservation

1,700

AWS workspaces
deployed in five days

Equipping staff with critical tools

Over the past five years, Fujitsu has worked hard to make DOC's cloud-first vision a reality. The urgency of the pandemic illustrates its success and how both DOC and Fujitsu can achieve great results in terms of the speed to upscale the environment and enabling new technologies to overcome challenges.

The ability to deliver thousands of new AWS workspaces in less than a week, and at the same time build a new cloud managed desktop is a towering achievement. And it provides DOC staff with the vital tools and services they need, regardless of location, during the trying and uncertain conditions of a global pandemic.

"Our cloud-first strategy enabled the business to keep operating," concludes Edginton. "Having AWS workspaces ensured secure and scalable access to our infrastructure, and under the circumstances, this proved invaluable. It could not have been done without the support of Fujitsu and AWS."