Innovation without compromise

FUJITSU

Scaling a financial services disrupter

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Scaling up a start-up is a challenge for any enterprise

Being small automatically gives you an advantage. You can be agile, lean, reactive. You can collaborate closely and quickly respond to market changes—all without being marred by decades of legacy systems.

It's a hugely fertile period. But when the flush of initial success fades, the next step can seem all the more daunting. These businesses need to ask themselves one question:

How can they scale without losing momentum?

Things become even more complex in finance. Regulatory red tape is incredibly hard to navigate and can slow the pace of innovation considerably. For example, employees may need to work across multiple devices, but this has to be balanced against the need to protect sensitive data.

This is the situation one of our clients found themselves.

They were an ambitious micro-enterprise—a breakout from a financial giant that was going from strength to strength from their WeWork office.

As they grew, they realized they needed to implement the security and compliance measures that other large financial service businesses had in place. And as their parent company already had a relationship with Fujitsu, they turned to us to develop a Proof of Value and lay the groundwork for a more agile future.

For most businesses, infrastructure starts with a building.
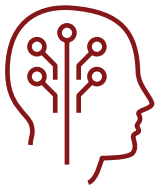
Understanding the problem

An enterprise will normally have a facility that houses their network—upon which their PCs and devices are based. Their controls and policies are then formed around this network.

It's a versatile model, but it didn't suit our client. They're an innovation hothouse—a disrupter with a people-first mentality in the heart of London's Fintech hub. They didn't want technology that talent had to work around. They wanted technology to work around the talent—enabling and empowering them.

From the outset, our approach was about keeping people at the heart of business. We knew we had to work in an agile way. This meant having a methodology that kept up with this innovation hothouse. Two weeks sprints, product demonstrations, and a continual loop of feedback would ensure we developed quickly and could adapt to our client's evolving needs.

The solution itself also needed to be flexible—in that it could accommodate the applications and SaaS tooling employees needed to reach their goals.

Furthermore, it needed to meet FCA compliance requirements, and provide a secure backbone that would protect data and intellectual property—all while keeping up with the pace of innovation.

A flexible solution

Workspace ONE™

To meet the challenge we worked with our partners VMware.

Our solution was comprised of several layers—the foundation of which was a digital platform called Workspace ONE.

As the name implies, this is a robust workspace solution. It integrates the access control, application management, and multi-platform endpoint management of any app or device—enabling our client to choose the hardware and software that suits their needs.

For example, our client was used to working with Slack and G-Suite. However, their parent company was not. Workplace ONE gave our client the controls to carry on using these apps, while still remaining an integral part of their parent company.

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okta

The second layer needed to ensure only registered users could access the company network. And for this, we worked with our partner Okta.

Okta Identity Cloud is a directory service provider. Think of them as a digital passport—an online identity they can use to work seamlessly, with registered users able to securely access the start-up's cloud services, but they could also communicate back into the parent company networks. This was key in enabling our client to straddle that line between being a micro-enterprise and a nimble, independent, organization.

Forcepoint

The final piece of the puzzle was a comprehensive Data Loss Prevention (DLP) solution to fully protect our client's applications and data. And for this, we enlisted our partner Forcepoint.

This was key for compliance. To satisfy regulators, different apps and different users needed to be granted different levels of access. This final cloud security layer meant that, whatever apps the user was trying to connect to, the appropriate security protocol could be activated, and FCA policies could be strictly followed at all times.

Of course, without the right hardware, none of this would have been achievable. Jigsaw24 are an Apple authorized hardware reseller, and they loaned us Apple computers and devices free of charge—enabling us to keep Proof of Value costs to a minimum.

Innovation without the red tape

So what was the outcome of the solution?

In short, our client was able to become fully compliant without sacrificing their agility or innovation.

Up until this point, the workforce had all used Mac devices. And this continued to be the case—although new devices can now be seamlessly added as the company grows.

Slack and G-Suite were mentioned above. But in effect, any application that helps teams do their job can be used. Unlike most FSI's, our client's culture isn't molded around technology. It's the technology that's molded around their culture—augmenting it, and enabling teams to work unfettered by red tape.

Most importantly, the setup is watertight. Access to SaaS applications are federated, meaning only applications compliant with Workplace ONE can access corporate data. At the same time, robust DLP controls ensure data cannot be copied or uploaded to nefarious sources.

And the cherry on the cake? The Proof of Value met all the challenging criteria set by the Fintech.

The future looks bright for our client

Moving forward, our hope is to migrate the entire business—giving them the ability to bring in new talent, use the applications they want, and preserve their innovation hothouse culture while scaling to new heights.

Contact us

If you'd like to talk to us about these assessments or any of the issues in this eBook, please contact:
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