CASE STUDY

Urbis works with Blue Connections IT and Lenovo to upgrade its ageing device fleet and enhance end-to-end lifecycle management

Overview

Urbis needed a new hardware and services partner to help provide efficiency and improved functionality. Urbis partnered with Blue Connections IT for an enhanced partnership model and its managed deployment lifecycle services before choosing Lenovo to upgrade its ageing device fleet and improve reliability and flexibility to meet changing business requirements.

About Urbis

Urbis has one simple goal – to shape cities and communities for a better future. It's something they achieve by drawing together a network of the brightest minds.

Urbis is a creative community of practice experts, working to deliver fresh thinking and independent advice and guidance – all backed up by real, evidence-based solutions. Whether you engage Urbis in the areas of planning, design, heritage, policy, valuations, transactions, economics or research, you know you're dealing with the experts who will connect you to a better outcome, every time.

Failing to meet core business requirements

Urbis' challenge was two-fold. First, the company needed to find a new hardware and services partner that could provide end-to-end lifecycle management and offer advice on the best solutions to meet the company's needs. Urbis found that it needed to get more value from a partner that had the expertise to help the organisation create and execute on its end user services strategy.

Without a value-adding partner, limited resources, and a lack of hardware availability, Urbis had almost 300 devices outside its three-year lifecycle timeframe and was seeing an increase in failures and performance issues. Furthermore, Urbis needed advice and support as it went to market for a new hardware platform to provide the flexibility it was lacking from its incumbent hardware platform.

Michael Fugaro, Director of Technology, Urbis, said, "From a technological perspective, Urbis needed to upgrade its ageing laptop fleet as users faced issues around the reliability of the hardware, creating operational inefficiencies. As a result, employees' work was constantly disrupted by numerous simple issues such as deteriorating battery life."

A lack of flexibility in the device models and specifications also failed to meet Urbis' core business requirements. Urbis employees often lacked the right tools to complete critical and complex tasks for their clients, such as data modelling and visualisation. Limited availability also meant in some cases employees were sharing high-powered machines as Urbis didn't have enough for every individual.

Finding the right partner and the best fit hardware vendor

To find the right partner, Urbis created a list of selection criteria, which it took to market. After weighing its criteria against various partners, Urbis realised that Blue Connections IT was a clear choice. Once the right partner was found, Urbis and Blue Connections IT went to market to find the best fit hardware vendor.

Michael Fugaro said, "When Urbis went to market with Blue Connections IT, the business was looking to upgrade its current ageing laptop fleet with an end-device solution that offered more flexibility and could free up employees' resources to focus on higher-value tasks. Urbis chose Blue Connections IT because of its enhanced partnership model, efficiently managed deployment lifecycle services, and breadth of experience. As part of this partnership, Urbis also became the first customer of Blue Connections IT to engage in a device carbon offset program."

In addition to Urbis' existing hardware platform, the company had vendors provide test devices. Testing lasted approximately three months as it was challenging to obtain the hardware required; however, by the end of the testing period, Urbis (supported by Blue Connections IT) chose Lenovo as the clear winner. Lenovo offered devices that were optimised for reliability, flexibility, and security, making it the ideal solution to Urbis' ageing fleet challenges.

As a fantastic value add, Lenovo also offered sustainability processes and a device offset program that makes it easier for businesses to offset the carbon emissions associated with each Lenovo end-user device over an average lifecycle at the point of purchase.

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>
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> Director of Technology, Urbis

BLUE CONNECTIONS IT

URBIS

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This assisted in helping Urbis achieve its goal of becoming a carbon neutral certified organisation by the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year. Urbis not only met its target but also surpassed it by six months, a testament to the company's dedication to reducing its carbon footprint and leading the way at creating sustainable and environmentally friendly communities.

Blue Connections IT managed the entire implementation process, which included data transition and device migrations that were completed mostly in-house; however, on some occasions, devices were deployed to staff working from home. The rollout is ongoing, with Blue Connections IT managing Urbis' buffer stock to minimise the impact of global supply constraints.

Blue Connections IT has also provided Urbis with device lifecycle management, making it easier to manage devices and become more sustainable, secure, and economical. During the decommissioning and disposal process, Blue Connections IT collects the device, wipes the hard drive, issues a digital certificate, and sells the device through a broker network for a second chance at life.

Most non-value devices will get e-wasted, with only two per cent going to landfill. Recycling e-waste reduces business costs and prioritises environmental protection.

All of this aligns with Blue Connections IT's commitment to operating sustainably and helping its customers and partners meet their emissions targets.

Enhancing end-user productivity, flexibility, and functionality

Urbis was able to upgrade its ageing device fleet with Blue Connections IT and Lenovo and move into proactive lifecycle management. Urbis aims to deploy 400 to 500 Lenovo devices by the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year and will continue phasing in the devices over the 2023-24 fiscal year. With Blue Connections IT, the business no longer needs to manage its laptop builds, and its team can focus on completing tasks that add value to the business and support its growing needs.

Michael Fugaro said, "With Lenovo's end-user devices, Urbis was able to solve many of its challenges with failing devices, performance issues, and lack of flexibility to meet business needs. Urbis' employees have more time to focus on supporting the business and its customers, while Blue Connections IT improves delivery service to Urbis and provides ongoing proactive support."

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Blue Connections IT continues to act as an extension of the Urbis team, ensuring that any end-user device older than three years will be refreshed. In addition, when an employee leaves the business, if the device has more than three months left in its lifecycle, it will be sent back to Blue Connections IT and reissued.

Michael Fugaro said, "The Blue Connections IT team has been instrumental in managing the line of communication with Lenovo and finding innovative ways to support Urbis with urgent tasks on an ad-hoc basis. Following the success of the Lenovo device rollout, Urbis is looking forward to maintaining its partnership with Blue Connections IT to continue its device lifecycle management scheme and further enhance end-user productivity, flexibility, and functionality."

Lenovo

IT