Technology Consolidation Increases Workforce Productivity

Highly respected Wollongong based Brodie, Long & Grew (BLG) was founded in 1994 and have grown to become one of the largest chartered accounting practices in NSW's South Coast region.
The company provides high-level advisory, accounting and taxation services to their blue-chip clients.

A Strategy to Build Business Resilience

The leadership team at BLG were concerned about the resilience and effectiveness of their IT infrastructure.

Distributed applications spread across user workstations was an unwieldy management burden because of inconsistent versions and incomplete security patching. Aging hardware posed reliability risks and single points of failure threatened staff efficiency.

The Partners at BLG engaged Huon IT, who specialise in technology for professional services firms, to provide strategic advice. BLG partner Scott Brodie remarked, "Our business is rapidly changing. We must deliver services when our clients need them. Our technology platform was not strategically suited to our delivery model. Huon IT took the time to understand our goals and delivered a solution that has exceeded our expectations."

WHAT IS **HIGH AVAILABILITY** (HA)?

Business systems designed to deliver continuous service operation without failure. The design goal for HA technology is to make sure that the IT systems keep business operations running continuously without unplanned interruption to service provision. Inbuilt resiliency mechanisms like automatic failover or self-healing are often used to increase system uptime.

Reducing Risk

After an intensive needs analysis, Huon IT designed and installed a HP high-availability server and storage infrastructure solution that would deliver mission critical service levels and reduce business risk. Systems could be managed and monitored remotely to guarantee that performance and availability goals were met. The new and energy efficient hardware delivered by Huon IT meant that BLG would also benefit from lower operating costs.

License Challenges

A wide diversity of hardware models and software versions had added complexity to BLG's IT infrastructure. Service desk support was complicated because problems were difficult to diagnose and fix remotely. Huon IT's solution was to implement Citrix's XenApp virtualisation platform and mitigate this risk by consolidating applications on their refreshed HP server cluster.

Future Proofing IT

Citrix's thin client (Xenapp) deployed across the organisation delivered many business benefits;

- Secure access on any device, any where
- Faster connectivity
- Improved customer service levels
- Enhanced security via policy enforcement
- Reduced IT administration
- Cost efficiency

Project Delivery Without Business Interruption

"Huon IT delivered the system upgrade during our busiest period of the year (the end of the Financial Year). Thanks to the precise collaborative planning between Huon IT and our people, many employees were unaware the project was being implemented. Huon IT met the tight deadlines without any interruption to daily operations."

Disaster Recovery

"A key goal was to make sure we had a disaster recovery plan in place. We have seen clients struggle to rebuild their business after an unplanned event." - Scott Brodie explained.

Huon IT recommended Veeam's Backup Essentials - a proven performer offering complete functionality out of the box whilst meeting BLG's business recovery needs.

Confidentiality – Multi-Factor Authentication

"Like all business owners the Partners were adamant about protecting our clients' confidential information. The added protection of the SafeWord Tokens really impresses our clients and gives us bank-grade security. It was definitely worth the investment," said founding partner Scott Brodie.

Technology: The Right Fit

Huon IT wrapped an end-to-end high availability infrastructure in a practical and affordable design combined with a seamless and well executed project delivery plan.

▶ INFRASTRUCTURE

HP DL360p 8th Generation Servers
High-Availability Server Cluster

HP MSA 2040 Storage Area Network
High performance storage solution

Extreme Networks X460 Switching
High Performance Virtualisation interconnectivity

▶ SECURITY

Compliance rules - policy
Users are forced to save files to the server

Multi-Factor Authentication
SafeWord tokens that integrate with existing back-end system protocols

Citrix XenApp
Secure encrypted connections to server based computing

▶ BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Veeam Backup Essentials
Automated backups
Complete disaster recovery solution

Microsoft Hyper-V
Server failover in the event of disruption

Synology NAS Server
Fast and reliable disk to disk backups

APC Smart UPS
Uninterruptable power for safe shutdown

▶ COMMUNICATIONS

Citrix XenApp
Higher performance over remote connections (improves user productivity)

Any device at any location permits staff to work securely whether at work or in transit

"We can now harness our new technology to improve our customer service delivery. The improvements have been noticed by our clients who have given us very positive feedback.Since Huon IT implemented this strategic upgrade, IT has proven to be a solid investment – not just another expense on our P&L."

Scott Brodie, Partner - Brodie, Long & Grew