

BDP gains greater control over costs, financial savings and service improvement

Computacenter's Rapid Migration Solution helped free up time and resources by automating the deployment process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology is a great enabler for every industry sector, but it can also be a major contributor to inefficiency and spiralling costs. It is therefore essential that organisations ensure their IT systems help rather than hinder their employees, and can be adapted to their individual needs.

For specialised sectors, such as architecture and engineering, access to the right technology can also make a real difference to a firm's competitiveness and profitability. Ensuring continuous access to IT systems, however, can be a real drain on an organisation's resources and funds – especially if the existing infrastructure lacks standardisation and central control.

When the Building Design Partnership recognised it needed to refresh its IT support model, it also decided to embark on a radical transformation of its existing infrastructure to help optimise costs savings and service improvement. To help implement the new environment and provide ongoing IT managed services, BDP turned to Computacenter.

By using Computacenter's Rapid Desktop Migration solution, BDP was able to implement its new desktop environment in a much shorter timeframe, and free up IT resources for other areas of the transformation project. As a result of the refresh, BDP has been able to equip its architects and engineers with the latest applications and systems, which will help improve the productivity and competitiveness of the firm. It has also been able to reduce

some of its operational costs, and improve the overall efficiency of its IT infrastructure and service delivery.

The Building Design Partnership (BDP) is Europe's largest architect-engineer group, and has more than 40 years' experience of providing architectural, design and engineering services.

In the UK, the partnership employs around 1,000 staff across a number of locations, including site offices for various projects. BDP has worked on a number of high-profile projects, including the development of the Channel Tunnel facilities in the UK, the Number One Court at Wimbledon, and a refurbishment of the Royal Albert Hall.

In recent years, technology has revolutionised the architectural and engineering industry, and IT systems are now at the heart of customer services, such as interior design, building restoration and feasibility studies. It is therefore essential that architects, engineers, designers and support staff all have access to reliable, efficient and cost-effective IT systems.

As Paul Davies, IT Director at BDP, explains: "This is a very creative company, and it is essential that we provide our staff with the tools they need to harness and apply their creativity on a daily basis. The architectural industry is also very visual and collaborative, so the ability to share and access information is vital. As a result our IT infrastructure needs to be continuously available, high-performing and have the scalability to cope with large file sizes."



Building Design Partnership

Business description

Europe's largest architect-engineer group

Business challenge

Ensure the group remains competitive by providing architects with the technology they need, and reducing operational costs

Solution

Transform IT infrastructure, and sign up to an ongoing managed services contract

Business benefits

Cost control has improved, and staff now have access to all the latest design and office technology

Services

- Planning and design
- Fulfilment
- Maintenance
- Configuration
- Redeployment and disposal
- Incident and problem management
- Installation
- Request and change management
- Remote management
- Rapid Desktop Migration Solution

Timescale

Implementation from October 2003 to April 2004, when a three-year managed service commenced

Partners

- Microsoft
- HP

Supporting role

The IT support function is therefore a vital part of BDP's business operations, and had expanded in line with the company's reliance on technology. "Support was being provided on a local basis, and as a result there was a lack of standardised processes and systems," comments Paul. This lack of standardisation meant that BDP's offices were using a variety of operating systems, hardware and applications, which not only further complicated the delivery of IT services but also made the process more costly.

"We recognised that we needed to centralise the management of our IT services, which would enable us to not only reduce operational costs but also improve performance," adds Paul. "There were two options open to us – either set up our own central helpdesk or bring in an external services provider with the necessary skills and resources. As design not IT is our core business, we opted for the latter approach."

Computacenter was awarded a three-year desktop managed services contract with BDP at the end of 2003. "Computacenter immediately understood our pain points, and was able to provide us with cost-effective ideas on how to resolve these issues," comments Paul. Prior to the commencement of the managed service in April 2004, however, BDP embarked on a radical transformation of its IT infrastructure. As Paul explains: "There were a number of changes we wanted to make, including implementing a standardised environment and laying the foundations for remote management."

Central to this transformation – and the achievement of these goals - was the roll-out of new Microsoft technology. The transformation, which was completed with help from Computacenter, included the implementation of Active Directory, Windows and Office XP, SMS 2003 plus around 300 new HP desktops.

BDP is also in the throes of rolling out Windows Server 2003 to all its sites, which is due to be completed by xxx.

Rapid transformation

The transformation programme utilised Computacenter's Rapid Desktop Migration (RDM) solution to help de-risk the roll-out of Windows XP to BDP's 10 UK locations. RDM builds on Microsoft's 'zero-touch' technology to provide organisations with a cost-effective, end-to-end deployment method, as David Taylor, Client Director for Computacenter, explains: "RDM brings together a range of core Computacenter services, such as auditing, compatibility testing, security, imaging, and application packaging to provide organisations with a seamless deployment tool."

By automating the deployment process, BDP and Computacenter were able to roll-out up to 30 desktops per night. "Computacenter's rapid migration solution meant we were able to deploy a much greater number of desktops in a short timeframe. It was fundamental to keeping the migration on schedule, and helped free up time and resources," comments Paul.

BDP also used the transformation programme as an opportunity to upgrade its network infrastructure and refresh its application portfolio. "The transition to the new IT environment was a massive undertaking, and we probably attempted to do too much in a short timeframe," comments Paul.

Improved competitiveness

Despite the complexity of the transformation, BDP has already started to reap the benefits of the new infrastructure, as Paul explains: "The architects and designers now have access to all the latest technical and office applications, which means they are better equipped to do their jobs, which aids the

overall competitiveness of the firm. New software can be rolled out much more easily and faster, and we have been able to introduce central licence pools, which has helped to reduce our licensing costs."

Lower licensing costs is not the only financial benefit – as a result of the transformation, BDP also has greater visibility of the total cost of delivering IT to the desktop. "We now have greater control over our costs, and we hope to make further financial savings and service improvement as the managed service becomes more established," adds Paul. "By partnering with Computacenter, we have been able to standardise and commoditise our IT support, and place it in the hands of a company that has IT service management at its core. This allows us to focus more on the applications and how they can be exploited to make our teams more profitable."