Case Study
Fly to the Cloud

Client:
Learning Academy Partnership Trust

Technology Partners:
Computeam

Project Date
Spring & Summer 2021

Learning Academy Partnership had aging servers and needed an updated digital platform to support its move to a server-less Trust

The Learning Academy Partnership was established in the summer of 2012 from its origins as a National Support School, at Ilsham C of E Academy. It now comprises of 11 Primary Schools in and around the Torquay area in the South West of England.

The Trusts core values are built around transforming children's lives by working together as a values-led family of exceptional academies. The aim is to deliver an entitlement to a world-class education across all their local communities, where every child flourishes. Every young person, regardless of their background or context, can achieve and exceed the highest of expectations.

The Challenge

The Challenge: How can you plan and deliver a completely new ICT platform in 8 months

Like so many successful learning trusts, the Learning Academy Partnership (LAP) had grown in the last few years and its IT had been bolted together as a consequence. Their infrastructure was built around on-premises Microsoft servers for administration and Google Workspace supplying their communication, application and curriculum services.

The ICT support across the Trust was delivered from 4 different companies, including an in-house technician, which had all supported a 'make do and mend' expenditure plan, which had resulted in many servers being end-of-life and over 80% of end user devices being over 5 years old.

There was no Trust-wide ICT strategic plan, and no engagement with school leaders to create one.

The Trust were happy with Google Workspace for Education supporting the curriculum, with engaged, skilled teachers fully immersed in this solution. The administration of the schools and Trust had coped with Google's tools, but had struggled with external incompatibilities and inconsistent licencing had led to sporadic success when engaging with other systems.

The broadband provision was adequate but fed into slow, out-of-date network infrastructure which had contributed, along with the other factors mentioned, to some staff 'giving up' on ICT.

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The Solution

The Solution: Migrate the Trust to a hybrid cloud solution, benefitting all users and cutting costs.

Computeam had been successful in winning an RM6103 tender to supply the IT infrastructure into a Trust new build, planned for September 2021. It soon became clear from both parties that this could evolve into a successful partnership, and a 3rd party specialist consultancy, Moxton Education, was employed to manage this on behalf of the Trust.

Documentation and standardising were key to the start of this journey and so an ICT board was drawn up with regular interaction from across the Trust to complete the necessary planning and strategising documents.

This in turn led to the drawing up of key actions, which fed into a costed 12 month operational plan. This included the following;

- Connectivity, safeguarding services and comms bid released and implemented.
- A Trust-wide Microsoft Office 365 and Teams deployment including full data migration services.
- Full training plan roll out with drop in workshops, help videos and continuous chat support.
- Trust-wide wireless and switching upgrade to support a cloud environment.
- Trust-wide network reconfiguration and server removal.
- Full MIS user synchronisation with SSO configuration across all end user devices.
- Complete ICT Support service SLAs with full RMM tools, Helpdesk and CRM ticketing systems.
- A lease-funded fully-manged end user device roll out, paid for by the savings in the support operations, meaning that the Trust is not funding revenue higher than it currently does.

The Result

The Result: A completely new, effective digital cloud platform, providing safe and robust services, future proofing a progressive and transformative Trust.

This extensive project was delivered over 3 phases during the spring and summer of 2021. The initial phase was to migrate the data from the servers before they failed completely, and this required an effective and robust platform for the data to be moved to. Through various working groups and the ICT Board, a Trust-wide Teams structure was created, and supported by an extensive CPD plan. All staff started the data migration, which was completed in 6 weeks. This was followed by the email and calendar migration shortly after, as all Trust emails were moved into a Microsoft environment, again support by a comprehensive training plan.

Once this extensive migration had been completed, all new and existing devices were reconfigured to log into Azure services and then Intune for device management.

Alongside these 2 phases of the project work, the 3rd phase was being implemented and all sites had a complete network refresh including switching and Wi-Fi access points. These services were then locked down and continually protected by an enterprise-level firewall and safeguarding solution that fully protected every member of the Trust, even when working from home.

All these changes have led to the creation of a site induction template that was recently implemented in April 2022, when a new school came onboard and the template was applied, leading to a successful migration of all services and infrastructure, including full training, in line with the Trust's and Computeam's design.

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Client Comment

Learning Academy Partnership Trust needed a trusted partner to bring us into a fully-managed cloud environment and support the benefits that technology can bring to our schools.

We engaged with Computeam through our 3rd party consultants and found them to be very professional and committed to our cause. What they have achieved in such a short time is remarkable and has really made an enormous difference already.

We will continue to work with Computeam as a trusted partner, to ensure our Trust is at the leading edge of technology with digital platforms.

Karen Barnett Chief Finance Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to Trustees, The Learning Academy Partnership

Our Statement

I was involved with Karen and the Trust from the beginning of their journey, so I'm really happy to see all of our plans come to fruition. A 3rd party consultant really helped by regularly bringing together the key people in a constructive and engaging way and helping drive this project along at a cracking pace. Well done to our Operations Team, they really delivered on this one and got the job done!

We love these projects as they have such a positive effect across the education sector and it relates very closely to Computeam's cloud-first approach. I'm looking forward to supporting the Trust in their mid and long term plans and can't wait to see the difference that makes, too.

This project showed us that:

- It's important that all key stakeholders are engaged in the decision making, which leads to a coherent digital strategy.
- Ensuring that training services accompany any new technology dramatically improves the impact and return on investment.
- Utilise 3rd party consultants to get the best return from your investment.

Charlotte Davies, Account Manager