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Ricoh IT Service transforms local authority ability to deliver shared services and improve best value

Adur & Worthing Councils typify local government efforts to combine resources and provide shared services and best value to the communities they serve. The Councils have used a Ricoh IT Service to transform the way they provide ICT services. The virtual desktop environment infrastructure solution developed by Ricoh - in three months instead of six - has reduced costs and is expected to pay for itself in two years; and has made it easier, quicker and more environmentally friendly to deploy shared ICT services.

Executive summary

Name:	**Adur & Worthing Councils**
Location:	**Shoreham-by-Sea and Worthing, West Sussex**
Size:	**1,300 staff**
Activity:	**Local government**

Challenges

- Improve the ability to deliver best value to the community
- Support a significant change in Council staff working practice
- Enable ICT to support delivery of Council services more efficiently

Solution

- Ricoh IT Service

Benefits

- Achieves significant cost savings which underpin an 'invest to save' funding strategy
- Return on investment expected in two years
- Helps Councils achieve best value service delivery
- Makes it easier and quicker to deploy shared ICT services
- Delivered a fully-operational, enterprise-wide, six-month project in just three months
- Reduces carbon emissions and improves environmental credentials

Challenges

Adur & Worthing Councils in West Sussex are two separate local authorities that have come together to deliver best value to their communities by sharing services. The Councils are located side-by-side on the south coast of England, with their head offices in Worthing. While the two Councils remain politically independent, operations such as governance, management, office structure and services are now merged.

This shared service strategy is part of UK local authorities' efforts to deliver best value to the communities they serve. Another initiative by Adur & Worthing is its *New Way of Working* programme, which aims to create the most efficient working styles for staff. Depending on their job function, Council staff are categorised by user type to determine if they require a permanent fixed desk, a flexible hot desk facility including working from home, or are fully mobile workers with no base of operations.

The *New Way of Working* programme went hand-in-hand with a reduction in real estate when the Councils reduced three head office locations down to two. This resulted in more staff than office space, at a ratio of around 8:10. But it presented ICT with a significant challenge.

Adur & Worthing's ICT function is a prime example of a merged service. It is managed by CenSus (Central Sussex Partnership) - an organisation formed from not just Adur & Worthing Councils, but also two additional councils in the region - Horsham District and Mid-Sussex District Councils. One of its key tasks was a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) project designed to make the process of providing each Council employee with the correct PC software and applications more efficient.

But developing the VDI was highly complex and something that required expert advice and support. Also, the *New Way of Working* programme meant that there were now multiple employee profiles that the VDI project needed to accommodate. Each Council department or function needed its own specialist software applications, but within each department there would be multiple types of worker. Human Resources (HR), for example, needed standard applications, such as email and word processing, alongside specialist HR applica-

tions. Some HR staff were fixed workers with their own desks and desktop PCs, while others worked from hot desks or from home using laptops (flexible).

CenSus happened to be talking to Ricoh about managed print services when the ICT challenge was mentioned. Mark Gawley, ICT Technical Services Manager at CenSus and head of the VDI project, discovered that not only was Ricoh a Microsoft Gold Partner, it was also highly competent and experienced in developing and deploying ICT infrastructure projects.

Gawley says, "It's true to say that previously we hadn't really considered Ricoh for the VDI project. But we found that Ricoh was a very strong contender.

Ricoh was shortlisted and won the contract. We chose Ricoh because of value for money and the speed and quality of its project design. Ricoh demonstrated, through its Microsoft Gold Partnership, that it had access to the right tools and the level of qualified staff that we needed. And right from the start Ricoh had the best plan."

Gawley added, "One of the key requirements was speed. This was going to be a very complex and challenging project involving a complete solution to deliver multiple user profiles, applications and operating systems to hundreds of staff. With the level of investment and criticality placed on the project, I would normally expect a project like this would take six months. As it turned out, Ricoh did it in three months."
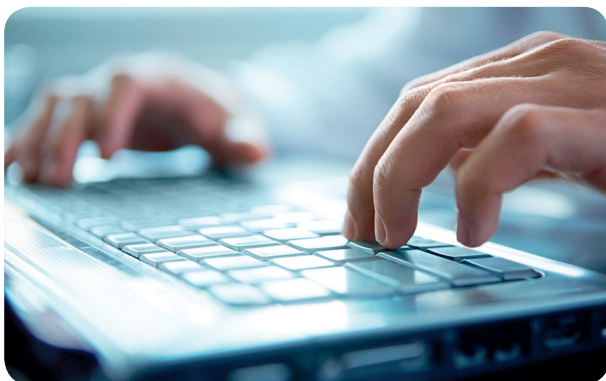
Solution

Adur & Worthing has used a Ricoh IT Service to help design and implement its VDI solution. It gives CenSus a single, common technology platform, centrally managed and deployed across all four councils in the partnership. The Ricoh solution used VMware and Microsoft Systems Centre Configuration Manager (SCCM) to create a single Gold Build, which can be managed and remotely deployed by CenSus on to any device.

A Gold Build defines a specific hardware profile and includes all the device drivers, operating systems, and standard software, such as Microsoft Office. Each Gold Build is created in and then deployed by SCCM. In addition, when a new user logs on to their PC, applications relevant to their department, role and work style are automatically downloaded on to their PC. Subsequent changes and upgrades can be similarly rolled out to users remotely.

"One of the complexities that Ricoh had to deal with was a major OS change. The councils are currently on Windows XP, but planning to move to Windows 7 and MS Office 10. So it wasn't just big bang and replace everything overnight, we had to deliver effectively two operating platforms in par-

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allel and they both have to work with all the legacy applications we are running," says Gawley.

The VDI solution has gone live at Adur & Worthing and is being used to manage 1000 employees. It will be used to manage a further 1000 users when rolled out to the other CenSus Councils. Ricoh worked in partnership with CenSus to determine business requirements and define the specific work style profile requirements. Ricoh helped design the VDI solution, which included the Gold Build, application packages, and servers. Ricoh also trained CenSus technicians so that once deployed, they could run and manage the VDI solution independently.

Gawley says, "The beauty of the solution and Ricoh's design is it allows us to deploy a Gold Build quickly and easily to a PC. But when a staff member gets a new PC, the job-specific applications and software are automatically deployed to their PC when they log on to the corporate network. Staff in parking, for instance, may have similar PCs to Legal, but will have a different set of applications."

Benefits

"The Ricoh VDI solution means we are far more reactive and able to meet the business requirement better. It is critical to Adur & Worthing because it needed to change the way it used ICT, in order to continue to deliver high quality services to the public. ICT is the key delivery platform to achieve versatility and adaptability in the way staff work and the way Councils utilises real estate. If the ICT doesn't work then we can't do it," says Gawley.

The Ricoh solution allows the Councils to deliver applications and systems in a far more efficient fashion, without the need for having to physically visit locations and hardware across the whole IT infrastructure. For Adur & Worthing, one of the key benefits of the solution is cost reduction. Gawley says, "The VDI project and our *New Way of Working* are funded through an 'invest to save' strategy. The money that we are saving by delivering ICT in this way is going to far outstrip the cost of retaining a third head office which would have cost around £500,000 a year. So within a couple of years this is going to pay for itself."

The specific savings that the Ricoh solution delivers to overall best value are significant. Gawley says, "If you've got to send out a technician to change or upgrade an application two or three miles away, that could be anything up to two hours of their time. With the Ricoh solution, we can now do that with a couple of clicks of the mouse. So we are saving many man hours, the wear and tear on the technician's vehicle, mileage costs, plus the positive impact this is having on reducing carbon emissions."

Gawley adds, "In terms of end-user customer satisfaction we anticipate quite a marked change in the way we can resolve support calls and issues which will help to reduce problem management. Before, the challenge was that every PC had its own build, it was a real overhead to manage and it required a lot of personal attention."

CenSus was impressed with Ricoh's approach to managing the VDI project. Gawley says, "I have to give Ricoh credit. It has a well-established project management process, especially for handling our multiple work style profiles. The Ricoh technicians working on site were rigorous in documenting and tracking development, keeping everything up-to-date and keeping us on our toes as well. It meant from a week-to-week basis, and almost daily, you could look at the way applications were being built and packaged, and see at a glance exactly where people were with the development of a given application. It is a very good model to use."

Ricoh Solution/Products

• Multi-organisation virtual desktop infrastructure solution

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Mark Gawley, ICT Technical Services Manager, CenSus, Adur & Worthing Councils ICT service

Adur & Worthing councils

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