Windows & Cloud for real world education
at Heatherton & Wyndham Christian Colleges

Modern ICT management practices, leveraging Microsoft devices and apps, and a supporting program of staff training have resulted in a resilient, scalable environment for Heatherton and Wyndham Christian Colleges.

The two campuses Wyndham and Heatherton Christian Colleges are geographically separated in the South Eastern and South Western suburbs of Melbourne. They operate a single administration for a thriving population Prep to Year 12 students. The Colleges' technology strategy complements an innovative curricula and individualised learning programs and pathways.

THE CHALLENGE

John Vilar, ICT Manager for Heatherton and Wyndham Christian Colleges, explains how far the schools needed to come in their technology transformation: "Different teachers were doing different things in their classrooms from BYOD laptops. The only managed devices were the PCs used by administration. We had Mac and Windows, with OS and software versions depending on who did what updates. We had no means of delivering the curriculum consistently across our campuses".With two campuses, and them being 60 kms apart, it was logical to proceed with a consistent and streamlined remote administration of the technology environment. Planning had to take into account continuing expansion of the organisation in both student numbers and locations.

The reasoning behind the Colleges' 2018 move to a 'whole of school' Microsoft (MS) environment

was because "we wanted our students to be well prepared for the real world - where MS dominates. And from an IT perspective, it meant easier device management with Surface, and seamless integration with O365," John says.

THE SOLUTION

"We've fully embraced cloud as the key to streamlining the management of our campuses – we just couldn't hold it all together without it," John says.

The priority projects undertaken with CompNow were an infrastructure move to the Azure Microsoft (MS) hosted cloud environment. Under this single system, the

> *"We've fully embraced cloud as the key to streamlining the management of everything across our campuses – from our infrastructure to devices and core apps like O365. And it's been a tried and tested, deliberate decision to have CompNow as our go-to partner in building the organisation's technology platform."*

John Vilar
ICT Manager
Heatherton and Wyndham Christian Colleges

AT A GLANCE

THE CHALLENGE

As a single administration overseeing the two school campuses – an hour's drive apart – it was essential to streamline the management of the ICT environment, covering infrastructure, devices & suppliers.

THE SOLUTION

To undertake a cloud transformation, standardise on the Microsoft platform and prove the value of a full service procurement partner.

THE BENEFITS

- Full service device procurement and after sales support

- Highly efficient AutoPilot/AutoTune driven management for zero touch device deployment

- Amazingly priced, ruggedised device packages and insurances for 1:1 rollout

- Microsoft devices and apps - the learning tools for real world workplaces

- CompNow teacher-focussed training programs essential to effective uptake

THE PRODUCTS & SERVICES

- Infrastructure management
- Procurement & Support services
- Microsoft Office 365 suite
- Microsoft Surface devices

Colleges have the assurance of a robust, scalable foundation. And the first of the new Surface hardware put in place were school owned Surface Laptop devices for staff and a rollout of Surface Go devices to Year 7s. Beyond the hardware, the management layer also tied in the underlying Windows 10 OS to user accounts for single sign onto all apps.

John worked closely with the Colleges' e-learning coordinator to identify the best device and pen option. "He was impressed with the natural way the Surface + Pen interacts and the associated apps," he says of the selection process.

CompNow took responsibility for a 'swap and go' initiative supporting the Colleges' move to being all-Microsoft schools. Leveraging AutoPilot - where each device is enrolled prior to dispatch, to be deployed with zero touch - and InTune management – CompNow completed the transformation in just three days before the start of a new term. These tools, from the Microsoft cloud-based management suite, are at the cutting edge of modern practice and key elements of the Colleges' centralised, remotely accessed systems.

"From my pricing research, the quotes we get from CompNow are so much better for our families. Their device, pen, rugged case and warranty packages are great value for money.

"Any device you put in a child's hand needs an extra layer of protection. From CompNow's dealings with other schools, they recommended an excellent case for our devices. Their pricing compared to retail is amazing," John says.

For when disaster does strike, the Colleges also took up Microsoft's accidental damage protection, arranged by CompNow. If any device screen breaks, over three years, parents only pay $99 to automatically hotswap to a new device.

To maximise the effectiveness of technology updates, CompNow has the role to conduct specific training, either for all staff or smaller targeted groups. And at the start of each new school year CompNow conducts professional development sessions "so our existing staff have a refresher and new staff are on board with the latest e-teaching methods," John says.

"I'm not from an education background but CompNow's PD people are. They speak the same language and tailor the training to give teachers what they need to know to make the technology really work in the classroom. The sessions – like the Zoom sessions we did recently - build confidence and inspire our staff to make the most of what we're introducing."

On their client's behalf, CompNow sources equipment, negotiates the price, and warehouses devices as needed. CompNow also handles all device repairs and swaps. "And there's no headaches because it's all managed through our customised CompNow portal," John says.

BENEFITS

The Colleges have benefitted from being early adopters of advanced management regimes.

"The change to cloud has been a completely positive experience. Having everyone on the same platform, all using O365 and the whole suite that comes with that – has been game changer from both an infrastructure management point of view and an e-learning and curriculum development standpoint.

"We're all one, with no server rooms. Device rollouts are exactly the same process every time. Using a single log in, teachers can go from one campus to another and have access to apps, devices, screens, printers – everything," John says.

The IT strategy meant the schools were ahead of the Covid curve in terms of device and app rollout, the environment's management, and activation of the MS platform with staff training. HCC and WCC, more easily than most, made the transition for students to work from home. "The decision to embrace Microsoft and O365 – particularly the powerful OneNote and Teams capabilities - powered our remote learning during that difficult time," John says.

While currently managing 300 devices, growth expectations within the next decade will see a student population of 1600. "From our strong foundation, we'll be able to take that expansion in our stride," he says.

For the Colleges the key to successful procurement is in having a partner like CompNow, one that has completed the comprehensive Microsoft certifications and accreditations. John says: "They aren't just a reseller. They stick around for the after sales support journey. They do the jumping through hoops so we don't have to, and sail us through all the vendor red tape."

"I came on board at the Colleges 9 years ago, from a managed services/ enterprise background. I thought I'd shake everything up - change all our suppliers and have no ongoing contracts. And it's a compliment to CompNow that, having been tried and tested, I've made the deliberate decision to have them as our go-to partner".