

Tech

APAC
ISSUE 4

JOURNAL™

Measuring Employee
Experience:

The Key to Workforce Retention

16

The **journey to
cybersecurity
maturity**
begins with
four strategies

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EXPLORING

NEW HORIZONS WITH
INTELLIGENT EDGE:

Strategies for Success

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Letter From the Editor

Defy the Status Quo

As we continue to navigate the world of work in 2022, including hybrid working and all that entails, it's clear that we're living – and working – through a monumental period of workforce disruption.

The responsibilities and expectations of employers are different now, from where we work and how we work, and with greater emphasis on employee well-being, company values, agility and giving back. In some respects, every day is a defiance to the old status quo.

And for the same reason you wouldn't bring a Tesla to a classic car mechanic, business leaders must depart from traditional thinking and find a fresh perspective to solve today's modern challenges.

Discovering how to smartly adopt new technology, keeping company assets secure, and succeeding at winning and retaining top talent — these challenges aren't new. But they're certainly different — evolved. And in this latest issue, we'll help you take on these challenges from a different vantage point.

When we featured the intelligent edge in a previous issue, we knew it would be the first of many conversations about this fast-growing trend. Tech enthusiasts have been quick to see the value of edge computing, but strategic adoption of any new technology is the key to successful deployment and return on investment. In our [feature story](#), one of our top experts of intelligent edge outlines best practices for a smart strategy.

Another topic we can't stop talking about: cybersecurity. Keeping pace with change, such as new threats, has always been a cybersecurity challenge. The Australian Government's Essential Eight framework outlines eight vital strategies to mitigate and protect against the impacts of cyber-attacks. [Read our advice](#) on how to adopt and implement best practices for these strategies, helping your organisation get on the right track to reaching an acceptable level of security maturity.

Finally, I'm pleased to share with you some fantastic new client stories; including how Insight helped Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) embrace a Microsoft-first data strategy; how DirectAsia digitally transformed and optimised IT costs with Insight and our ongoing multicloud and billing management, support and technical professional services for West Kowloon District Cultural Authority.

I hope this issue of the Tech Journal empowers you to see your current challenges from a different angle and inevitably helps your organisation rise to a new vantage point.



Athena

Athena Thompson

Director Marketing and Strategic Partnerships,
Insight APAC

Roadblocks

OR

on-ramps?

Accelerate innovation.

See what's driving digital transformation in 2022.

In 2021, IT and business leaders prioritised digital transformation more than ever before. And it's no wonder — the stakes are higher than ever.

Insight commissioned IDG Research Services to survey hundreds of CIOs, CTOs, CSOs and other IT professionals in leadership roles to learn how priorities are shifting, which initiatives are making the most progress and how organisations are achieving measurable business results.

Here's what we found.



Insight 



report digital transformation has **accelerated over the last 18 months.**



expect IT modernisation to have a **transformative/significant impact on long-term growth.**



still report that innovation and strategic growth are constrained by existing IT infrastructure, operations and culture.

Learn the top innovation roadblocks organisations like yours face today — and how they plan to handle them.

Discover these and other digital transformation trends in the “The Path to Digital Transformation: Where IT Leaders Stand in 2022.”

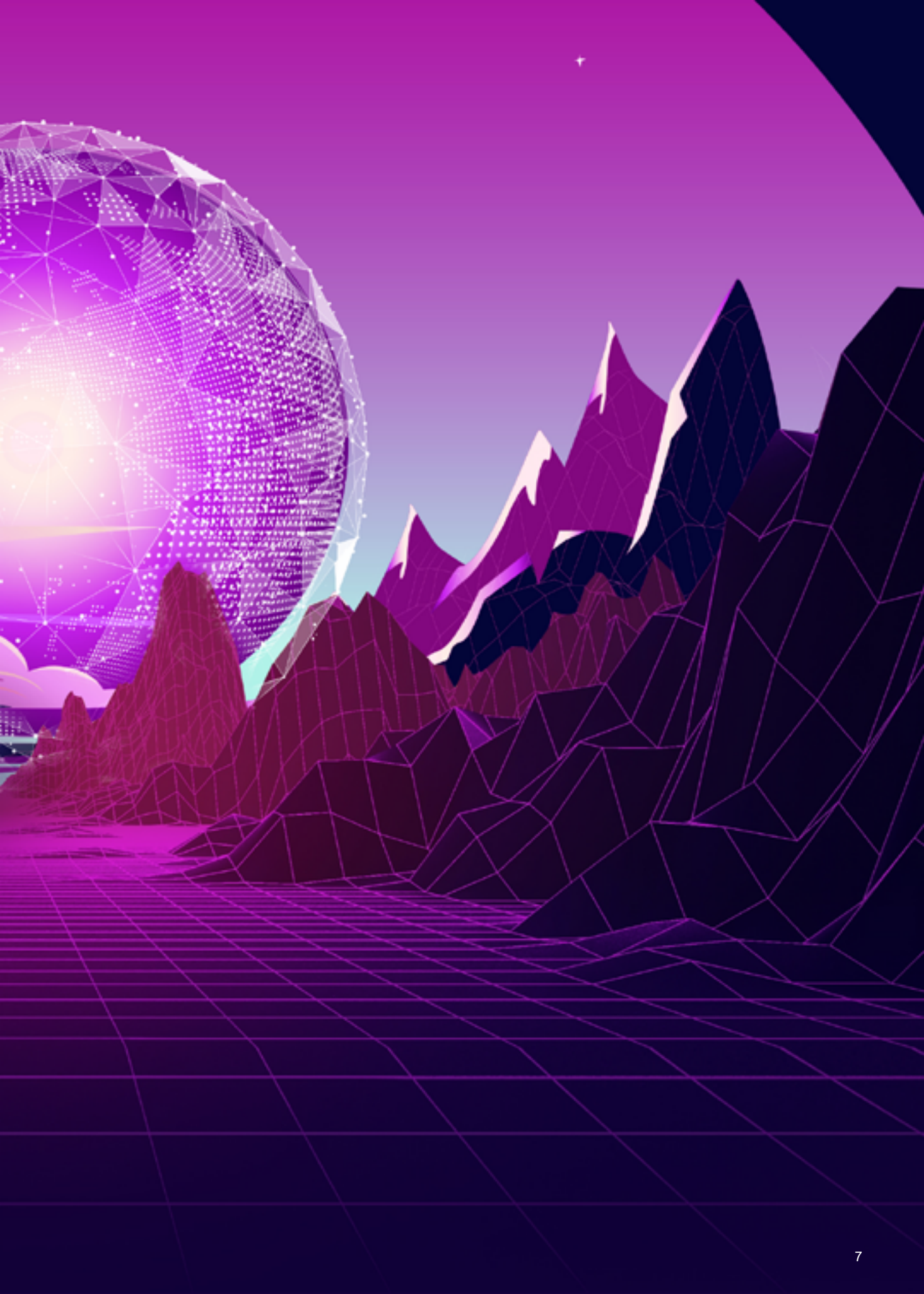
Access the full survey results and related resources here:
https://au.insight.com/en_AU/what-we-do/digital-innovation.html



EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS WITH INTELLIGENT EDGE:

Strategies for Success

Intelligent edge is not just about real-time data collection. It's about reaching a new vantage point — one built on smart moves and full-scale operationalisation. Here's how you do it.



I've spent nearly 20 years in the technology space. Two decades in any industry means adapting to change — a lot. But when it comes to technology, the **way** in which you adapt means everything now. Businesses can't afford to dive in blindly to the "next big thing." They can't embark on a mission without a plan. Not without consequences.

Whether it's computer vision, predictive maintenance or anomaly detection, it doesn't matter what form of Artificial Intelligence (AI) the business is buzzing about — without strategy and operationalisation, it can't be that intelligent of an investment. Intelligent edge is no exception. Businesses are eager to embrace it, but that can't be done thoughtfully without expanding your view and examining all your options.

So let's explore intelligent edge: how it works across the IT ecosystem, and the types of conversations I'm having with clients to ensure maximum ROI and lasting success.

Level set: What is the intelligent edge?

Traditionally, data gets generated, moves to a data centre or the cloud, and gets processed and finally accessed. There is lag and latency in this method. Intelligent edge brings that processing (or some part of it) right down to where that data is generated. This leads to quick data analysis and more intentional business decisions.

But to realise lasting success with intelligent edge, we need to start thinking about it across categories: Your hardware, infrastructure, software and security at the edge — and all the careful planning and orchestration required to reap its many benefits.

Six ways you'll run smarter with intelligent edge



Faster decision-making



Better visibility and transparency



More efficient workflows (through automation)



Reduced operating costs



Enhanced productivity



Increased reliability

New paths for edge devices: distributed intelligence

When you think of how to collect and store data traditionally, you might envision a data center with big compute racks. Think bulky form factors. But your form factors

don't always need to have a large footprint to embrace intelligent edge. It all depends on your business use case. You may be able to distribute your form factors, leveraging smaller hardware with an aggregation point at the edge itself, and that can have a bigger compute component.

Remember: An edge device is any piece of hardware that controls and processes the data and flow between where the data is generated and the enterprise network.

It's an empowering definition, because you can still run your software on a very small device like an Intel NUC, Lenovo, HPE or Dell Gateway, all of which could run on a CPU — then take your stack and move it to a bigger compute. That compute could have dedicated GPUs, IGPU or multi-processors.

Businesses can even use their existing hardware and bring that intelligence closer to it. In manufacturing and retail, we're seeing the use of existing (not specialty) cameras doing analysis of how space is being used. You have options. It's just a matter of knowing what those options are (which many businesses today do not) and determining which works best for your use case and objectives.

Early strides:

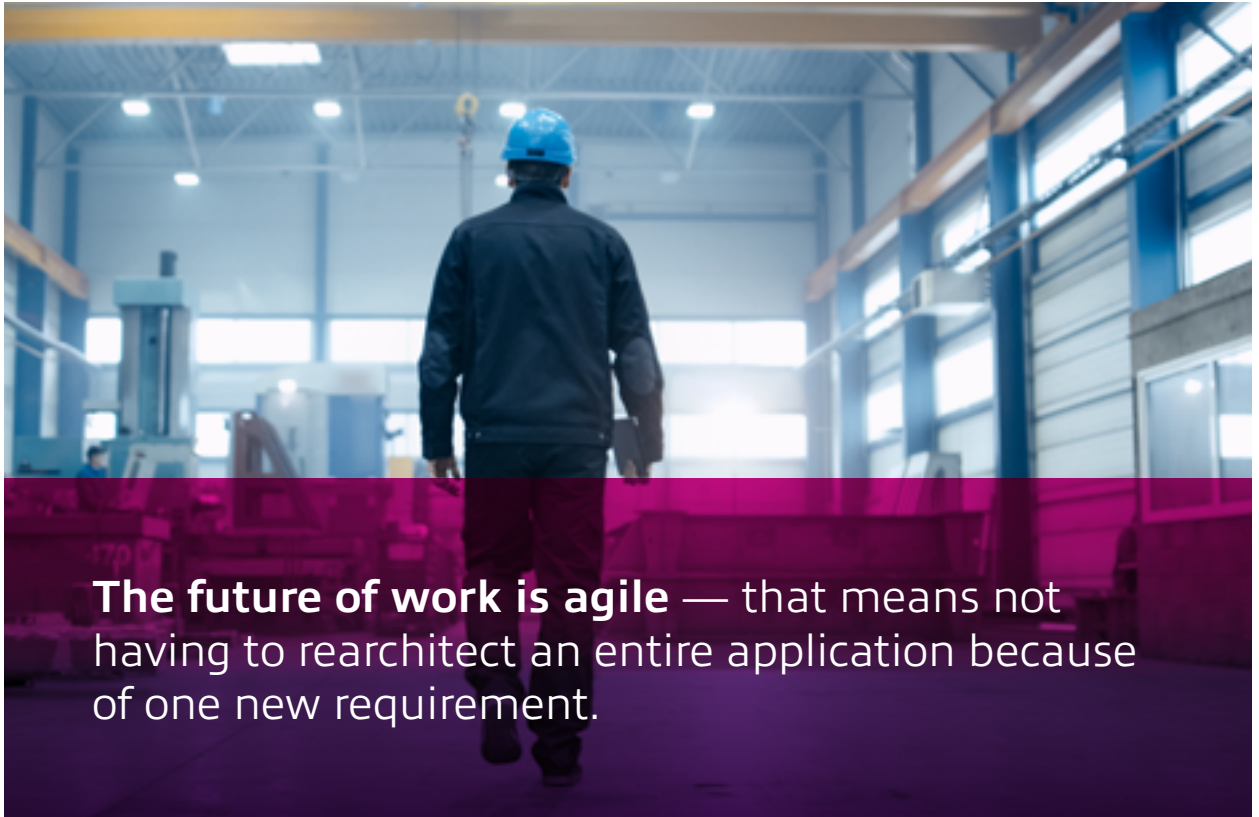
What were your first experiences with technology?

— // —————

My journey into the technology world started in eighth grade, learning assembly language for 8085 and then 8086. To this day, learning any technology is a relaxing activity for me and a **vehicle** to get away from life's stress.

————— // —





The future of work is agile — that means not having to rearchitect an entire application because of one new requirement.

Navigating edge applications

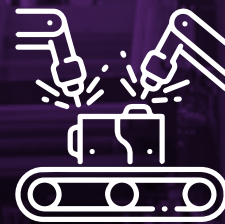
Of course, we can't look at edge devices in a vacuum. The applications that power them are equally important. Today, there are software stacks that are built with specialisation. For instance, software stacks can be given an AI model, and that stack will know exactly how to run on a GPU, an IGPU or an FGPA. The AI model can even be accelerated with a deep learning toolkit like Intel OpenVINO or NVIDIA SDKs.

This flexibility is a gamechanger. Form factors will keep changing at the edge, but you won't need to keep developing separate, "snowflake" solutions for every new hardware that comes to the forefront.

The applications don't need to be complex.

Many businesses think they need machine learning or deep neural networks to thrive with intelligent edge. Not necessarily. Even an application running simple threshold-based anomaly detection is a form of intelligent edge.

An application could have just 100 lines of code and run auto-threshold, alerting you if a value reaches above or below a predefined level. In this case, that application would still give you business intelligence that's actionable — and therefore valuable.



Manufacturing floors are leveraging intelligent edge to reduce the manual workload for employees — using cameras on semi-lines that detect product anomalies.

One of the most important considerations for edge applications is this: They should be extensible, not monolithic. How you build your applications for today and tomorrow is critical. Ask yourself: What use cases down the line will we be able to leverage this application and hardware for? Are we pigeonholing ourselves by only solving for today? The future of work is agile — that means not having to rearchitect an entire application because of one new requirement.

Making headway on: **COMPUTER VISION**

Computer vision is a base component that enables edge applications. But computer vision by itself doesn't hold a great deal of value.

Layer applications on your computer vision models that consider the operationalisation of those models.

That means being able to run multiple models simultaneously, providing different ways to alert and take actions based on the results of each model.

More ways to thrive — and threats to stop

Edge locations create more interconnectedness between hardware, software and applications. They also create more entry points for cybercriminals. Thinking more holistically about security has never been more important. A code can be developed securely, but how that code functions across the organisation must be seriously considered. This includes where the code executes and the data that it's using. Think of security vulnerabilities such as Log4j that can strike without warning. Without any mechanisms to update code across the edge ecosystem, business operations can be caught off guard and severely hindered.

Path to safety: Traits of strong edge security

Alignment to a cybersecurity framework, such as National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) (across edge hardware, infrastructure and software)

Well-documented policies and processes

Exception-based security (not one-size-fits-all)

Centralised visibility and unified controls

Consistent end-user training

Security as business continuity (regular testing, assessment and tweaking as needed)

Don't let security complexities deter you from reaping the benefits of intelligent edge. Security is complex with or without an intelligent edge. Most of the businesses we work with just need guidance to get organised and strategic with how they secure the many moving parts of their business. Security is a layered approach, and the complexity of securing your edge solution from the ground up (device to cloud) will depend largely on:

- The business use case
- The layers of security that will be required (based on the risk profile of your business outcome)
- The architecture of the solution



Managing at scale makes the mission worthwhile.

Operating at the edge across three locations is one thing, but what about 400 locations? What about 3,000? As businesses continue down the intelligent edge path, they will accrue multiple generations of gear in the

field (spanning different form factor types with diverse use cases). A well-rounded plan for ongoing monitoring, administration and optimisation across that ecosystem ensures the intelligent edge continues to provide value back to the business. As you scale to multiple deployments across locations, a managed endpoint monitoring strategy will be key. This will ensure the workloads that are delivering business outcomes are secure and stable.

Your new way of working after your investment must be sustainable. Managing all your edge hardware, software and security at scale will give you a consistent outcome.

Use cases: A look at what's possible



ENERGY

Power grid maintenance, pipeline optimisation, smart turbines



TRANSPORTATION

Roadways and intersections, mass transit, airports



RETAIL

Inventory checks, Augmented Reality (AR) fitting rooms, shopping trends



MANUFACTURING

Factory networks, plant efficiency, asset monitoring



HEALTHCARE

Medical asset tracking, temperature tracking, patient monitoring, wayfinding



CONNECTED CITIES

Smart lighting, waste management, security, public connectivity



My challenge to
you is this:

Keep exploring
what it means to
transform with
purpose.



How to get started

Success at the edge starts with a powerful mindset shift that strategy and planning is everything. The biggest piece of advice we give businesses thinking of adopting an intelligent edge solution is this: Understand the value of solving a problem, then look for the appropriate technical solution. This helps create an investment strategy for the solution and a clear value proposition. It also helps determine the risk profile for that solution.

So, what should you do first once you're ready to invest time and resources into an intelligent edge initiative?

Focus on a simple use case that could solve a business problem you're facing. Any task that's done in a repeatable way is fair game for a Minimum Viable Product (MVP).

Envisioning workshops have been invaluable for our clients in terms of pinpointing use cases, requirements and success criteria for productive pilot projects. Once you have proof of value, make sure your MVP moves forward into production. As a technologist, it has been deeply gratifying to help organisations build and sustain this kind of momentum.



Start your journey.

No matter what your goals are, you can build a winning intelligent edge strategy spanning hardware, software, security and beyond.
See how we can help.

The horizon is full of opportunities. Enjoy the view.

Technology will always give us smarter ways to do business. But I say it's time to reimagine what it means to run smarter altogether. My challenge to you is this: Keep exploring what it means to transform with purpose. Commit to a technology strategy that covers more ground than what you may be comfortable with. Take a phased approach. Then, watch your business rise to a new vantage point. As your view expands, you'll gain the confidence to be ambitious and act on all the exciting possibilities you never knew existed.



About the author

Amol Ajgaonkar

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Measuring Employee Experience:

The **Key** to Workforce Retention

Workforce retention is a major topic of concern for business leaders. With many job openings on the market, employers find it hard to stand out from the crowd. Here's what you need to know about today's work climate and how measuring employee experience can help.

Research from Microsoft and Bankrate backs this up, reporting that **54% and 77% of Gen Zs**, respectively, are thinking about quitting.



41% of the global workforce will consider leaving their jobs within the next year.

The Great Resignation isn't slowing down in 2022.

Employees aged 30-45 are the most likely to resign.



The resignation rate for this age group rose by **20% from 2020 to 2021.**

Why are employees resigning?

61%

of all job seekers are interested in remote job opportunities for 2022.

79%

of employed job seekers believe they can make more money by switching jobs.

33%

of those asked to return to an office full time are "not very happy" or "not at all happy."

54%

of surveyed employees say they feel overworked.



One in five say their employer doesn't care about their work-life balance.



Trillions of productivity signals from Microsoft 365 quantify the precise digital exhaustion workers are feeling.

Microsoft,

2021 Work Trend Index: Annual Report

How do we disrupt the trend?

1

Offer greater flexibility via remote and hybrid work.

73% of employees want flexible remote work options. But 64% are craving more in-person time with their teams too.

2

Reimagine the office for modern work.

66% of business decision-makers are considering redesigning physical workspaces to better accommodate hybrid work.

3

Reevaluate the perks and benefits your company offers.

- 46% of workers say their employer does not help with remote work expenses.
- 80% of job seekers think employers need to re-evaluate the benefits they offer.

4

Promote healthy work-life balance by measuring employee experience.

There's so much data available through the productivity apps we use every day. Employee experience platforms like Microsoft Viva Insights can aggregate this data and provide insights to help you evaluate employee well-being.

What can employee experience data tell us?

Are employees getting burned out?

The average Microsoft Teams user is sending 45% more chats per week and 42% more chats after hours.

What factors are impacting employee productivity?

Time spent in meetings has more than doubled (2.5x) globally.

62% of meetings and calls are unscheduled or conducted ad hoc.

Are employees still able to form connections at work?

50% of people respond to Teams chats within five minutes or less.

Interactions outside the immediate team have diminished since the start of the pandemic.



Get smart about your employee experience.

Don't ignore the signals your workforce is sending. Gather and interpret data with employee experience tracking through Microsoft Viva Insights.

[Learn how to implement Microsoft Viva Insights and make meaningful changes to your employee experience with help from Insight.](#)

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Mearian, L. (2022, Jan. 6). No End in Sight for The Great Resignation; Workers Keep Quitting for Better Pay, Benefits. Computerworld.

Microsoft. (2021, March 22). 2021 Work Trend Index: Annual Report.

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k the way you want with peace of mind. Built to deliver a best-in-class
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and meetings.

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and instantly switch between
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voice command, no
keyboard required.

Perform at your best with
Windows 11-powered laptops from Dell Technologies.

Catholic Schools

NSW chalks up big data and analytics win for schools and students



Catholic Schools NSW chalks up big data and analytics win for schools and students. With schools and students spread across the length and breadth of NSW, Catholic Schools NSW had to wrangle data that was also widely dispersed, often in hard to access silos. It is now undertaking a root and branch modernisation, deploying an Azure based solution that is delivering fingertip access to all data, and the tools to streamline reporting and optimise learning outcomes.



Across New South Wales 257,000 students attend 598 Catholic schools operated by 30,000 staff, across 11 dioceses as well as 46 independent Catholic schools. Each student, each staff member, each school, each diocese has their own data trail that needs to be maintained, managed, reported on and analysed.

Catholic Schools NSW has a broad and overarching role to support the schools – but it's not involved operationally in students' learning. It also needs access to data to meet reporting requirements and for strategic planning and administration purposes, and plays a key role in ensuring schools have access to the information they need to ensure the best outcome for students and communities.

In the past there have been myriad silos of information across the State that have been hard to keep track of, to access and to analyse.

A major data and analytics initiative being undertaken by Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) will break open those silos, create a comprehensive and up-to-date central data source that can be accessed and interpreted using modern analytics platforms by authorised personnel across the entire network.

It's designed to streamline operations, accelerate reporting and ensure that schools have data that will allow each of their students to achieve their full potential.

"Every school and diocese has a rich array of data. We knew there was some incredibly valuable data out there that could benefit all of our schools – but it wasn't centrally available. There was no sharing of datasets, no transparency across dioceses," says Brad Anderson, Head of Data and Information Systems, CSNSW.

"Our dioceses were becoming frustrated about the inability to access raw data, and we were concerned about the lack of transparency. For example, if they wanted to analyse NAPLAN or HSC results alongside attendance or extra-curricular activities, getting their hands on all the right data was proving to be too hard."

Mapping the journey

On any journey it's important to understand where you are starting from. Working with Microsoft partner, Insight, a data estate assessment was undertaken.

"We knew that Insight had done some work with other Catholic institutions and education organisations around data, and we were very confident in their ability to help us get the most value from our data estate," says Anderson. "Plus, they came highly recommended from Microsoft, who is an important partner of ours."

Insight was named Worldwide Microsoft Partner of the Year award in Solution Assessments, and Migration to Azure in 2021. Over 12 weeks, it worked closely with CSNSW's Data and Information Systems team mapping data, people, process and technology.

Armed with the findings of that investigation, CSNSW began the data and analytics transformation, starting with a new modern digital foundation. Microsoft Azure and Azure Databricks are being used to ingest data from the schools and dioceses with Power BI deployed to streamline analysis and reporting.

During the first 12 months of the program CSNSW has deployed the foundational technology and is working with Insight to ingest data from across the network and support staff as they develop analytics skills to extract maximum value for schools and students.

It's already having significant impact. For example, instead of CSNSW having to compile data from multiple systems spread across the State to comply with the NSW Department of Education census requirements, the data required are now centralised and instantly accessible.



"With the new system, data automatically goes where it needs to go. All that manual handling we were doing previously is eliminated. We are literally saving hundreds of hours of time. Not only does our new data platform free up time, but it shifts our perspective and allows people to move faster into analytical and exploratory exercises," says Anderson.

Impact from insights

Anderson notes the new data and analytics platform has the capacity to transform the way data is used across the CSNSW network.

"A lot of the conversations that we were having with the diocese and the independent schools were all around how do we get this data from A to B? Not, what can it tell us, what can we learn from it, and how can we use it to make better decisions? It was all around just shunting data around essentially, and to me, that's a wasted opportunity.

"There's so much that we could be doing, especially when you're looking at combining all the different data that we operate. So we have as part of our normal operations, capturing it and combining it in one place. It becomes very powerful. You can start to build predictive analytics and machine learning models off that."

Khaled Auf, Practice Manager - Services, Insight says; "The key to success with data and analytics transformation is to get the foundations right. Insight worked with CSNSW on a thorough assessment of the current data estate, outlining strengths and weaknesses.

"We created a data optimisation strategy and technology and analytics roadmap, as well as a summary designed to share the vision that is transforming the way data is used and amplifying the impact it is having."

CSNSW is also looking to develop data capabilities around agile analytics, using Analytics Workbench and DataShare – making it easier to combine and share

third-party data with dioceses adding to the body of knowledge available to steer decision making.

Dioceses will have the capability to combine transactional data from a wide array of applications and external sources such as the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

They can then build their own ad-hoc or structured analytics. "Previously, two schools within one diocese might have had different datasets they couldn't combine. Now, it's all centralised with the right privacy settings in place, for powerful data analysis," says Anderson.

Empowering each diocese and school with intuitive analytics through Power BI delivers; "Whatever they need to do their own analysis and combine with their own data. We don't get operational in terms of the running of the schools. They might want to combine attendance and extracurricular activities and other things with academic results, for example, which we wouldn't necessarily have a reason to have access to, but they would on their end."

Already he says that the streamlined data access and analysis is saving dioceses six to eight weeks each year that would previously have been required just to find and process data that had been squirreled away in different silos. Now data is just a click away.

Anderson says there are more savings ahead as schools start to make more sophisticated use of data to drive learning outcomes, and analytics becomes embedded in the normal running of schools and dioceses as a way to drive continuous improvement.



.....

The journey to cybersecurity maturity begins with **4** strategies

- Keeping pace with change, such as new threats, has always been a cybersecurity challenge. The change to remote and hybrid work has been a paradigm shift for many organisations that are now re-evaluating their entire cybersecurity strategy.

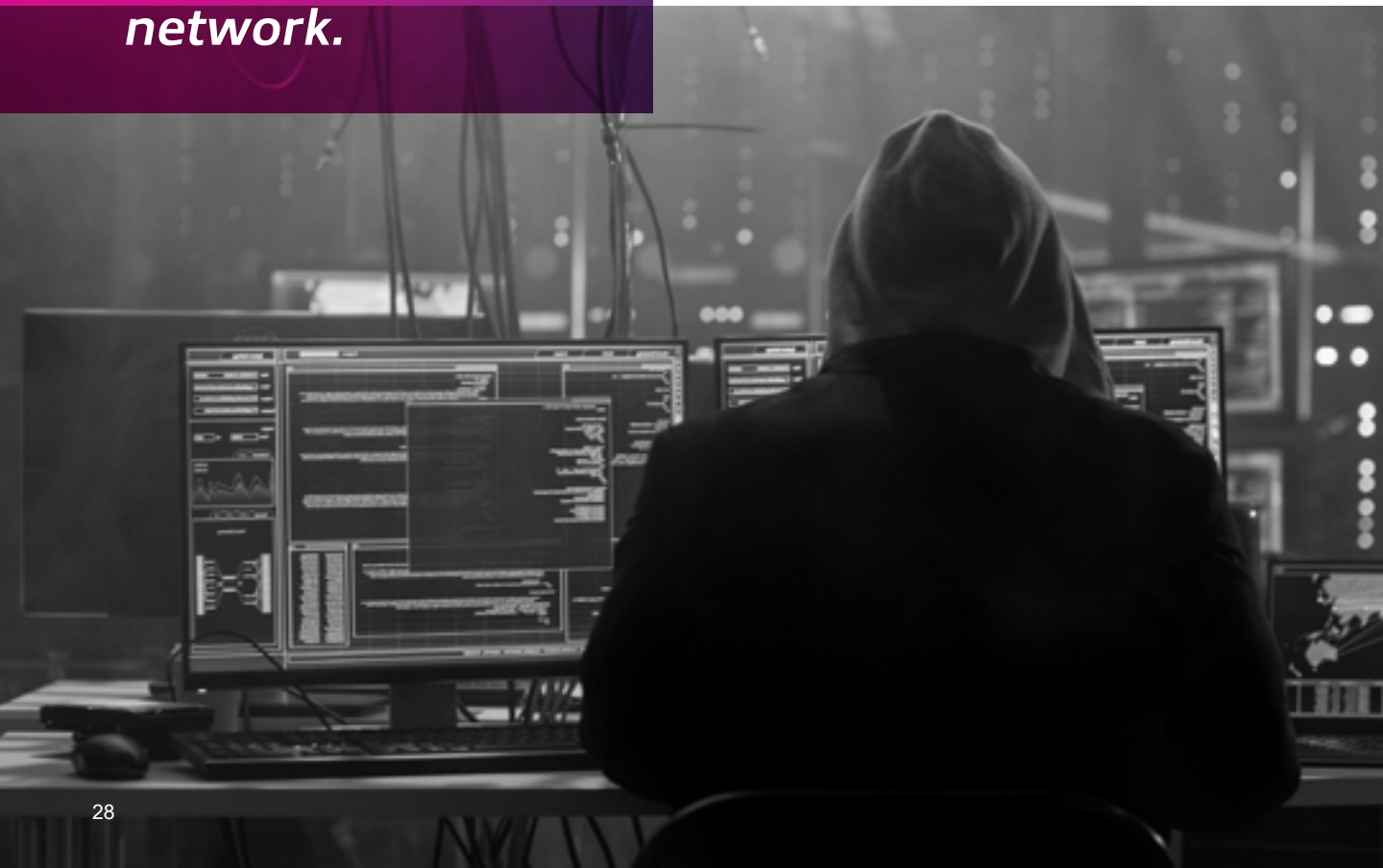


Their challenge is to protect systems and business data in uncontrolled environments well beyond the traditional office network. But adapting to this new reality can't be done overnight. It requires a well-planned transition to modern security strategies and tools. And that starts with ensuring you've got the basics right.

The challenge is to protect systems and business data in uncontrolled environments well beyond the traditional office network.

The Australian Government's Essential Eight framework outlines eight vital strategies to mitigate and protect against the impacts of cyber attacks. In particular, five of those strategies can help organisations secure endpoints in any location. These include: implementing application controls, patching applications and operating systems, configuring Microsoft Office macro settings, and hardening applications.

By implementing these proactive steps, your organisation won't be relying solely on reactive malware detection. Here's our advice on how to adopt and implement best practices for these strategies, helping your organisation get on the right track to reaching an acceptable level of security maturity.



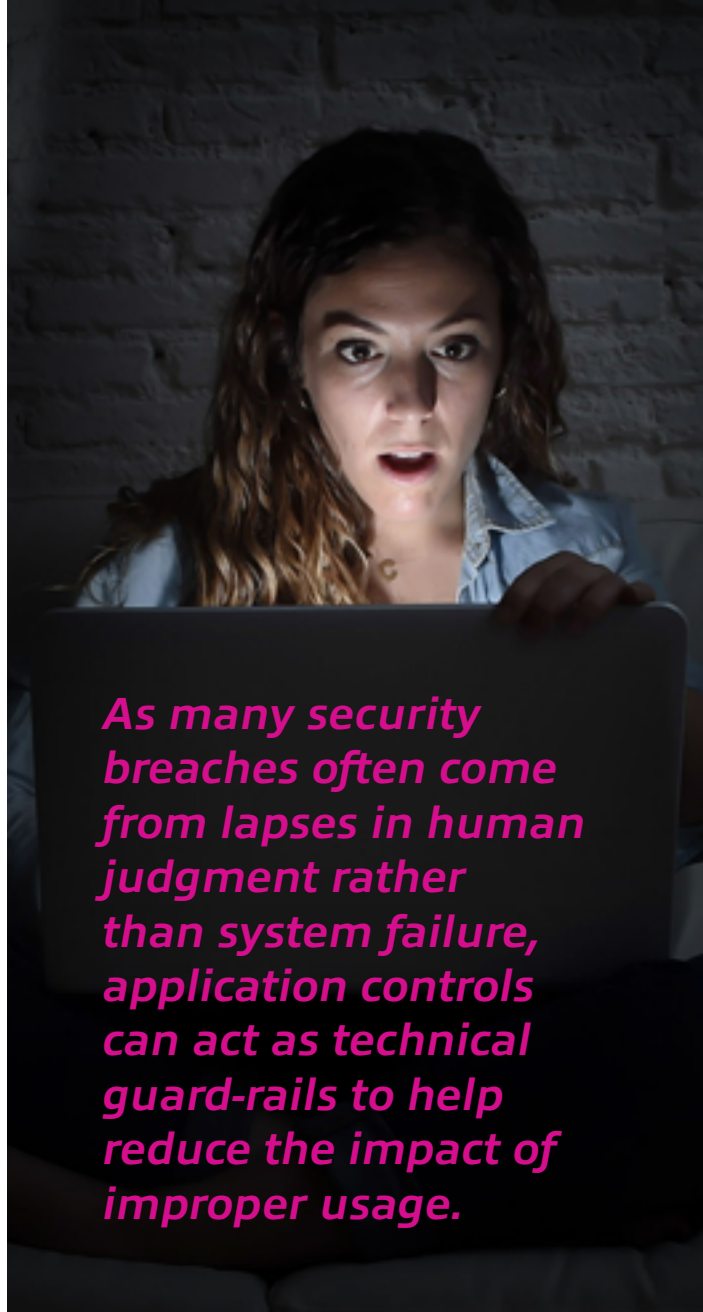
1

Implement application controls

The first strategy is to ensure only approved applications can be executed on systems that access business networks and data. This prevents the spread of malicious code and the installation or use of unapproved applications that could compromise systems and data.

On a basic level, it requires the use of allow lists – the process of identifying approved applications, and developing, maintaining and validating application control rules on a regular basis. Best practices include cloud-driven allow-list solutions, along with publisher certificate rules (combining publisher and product names) and path rules to ensure file systems permissions are configured to prevent the unauthorised modification of folder and file permissions, contents and individual files.

As many security breaches often come from lapses in human judgment rather than system failure, application controls can act as technical guard-rails to help reduce the impact of improper usage. It can even be helpful to configure application controls to



As many security breaches often come from lapses in human judgment rather than system failure, application controls can act as technical guard-rails to help reduce the impact of improper usage.

generate usage logs that record file names, time stamps and usernames to enable investigations and to triage activity when faced with attempts to execute malicious code.

Insight helps companies implement application controls, typically using Microsoft solutions such as Windows Defender Application Control (WDAC) and AppLocker.

2

Monitor and apply software patches

The Essential Eight splits this into two strategies – for applications and operating systems – but the fundamentals are the same: Software updates, or patches, need to be applied as quickly as possible to fix security vulnerabilities and bugs, and mitigate the risks of systems being compromised.

Business IT teams need to be aware of the applications and operating systems running on their networks, and whether these are up to date with the latest updates. Insight recommends maintaining an inventory of all applications running on your systems, including software and firmware that run on network physical appliances and virtually. This inventory should already be in place, having been put together during the application allow-list process.

From then on, it's just a matter of making sure your organisation is running the latest stable version of each application. If not, acquire, test and deploy the necessary patches or updates.

However, patching becomes more complicated when endpoints are remote. According to research by cloud-based platform provider



Action1, this process can even take up to 2.5 times longer than manual patching. With the need to keep the growing number of remote endpoints secure, companies should consider transitioning to cloud-based endpoint management solutions. Instead of relying on manual patching or internal patch testing and deployment procedures, cloud-based solutions can help overcome the challenges of securing endpoints that aren't on the corporate network.

Insight can help clients with patch management solutions including Microsoft Endpoint Manager, Windows Update for Business, and



Microsoft Defender for Endpoint. We can also help leverage Azure cloud capabilities to automate patching strategies for on-premises and multi-cloud data centres.

3

Configure macro settings

In applications like Microsoft Office, macros can save users time and reduce potential data entry errors in routine tasks. But macros execute code, making documents vulnerable to being exploited by attackers intent on infecting systems or stealing data.

The solution is not to disable all macros, but to selectively trust macros while removing the choice from end users. This means digitally signing macros and then locking the application to disable all but the signed ones. Also consider policies that prevent protective measures from being disabled, ensuring that only signed macros are run.

A key step here is to survey your current macro usage and create an inventory. Evaluate the inventory and delete the macros you don't use. Properly managed macro settings can give your organisation the benefits of unhindered productivity while minimising security risks.

It's important to understand your current policy on Microsoft Office macros, or to create a policy if you don't have one already. This is where you may need the support or resources of a partner like Insight, who can help you lock down your macros, control their distribution and manage end user control over applications using tools like Endpoint Manager configuration settings and Microsoft Defender for Office 365.

4

Harden applications

Applications are often installed with default settings, options, services and capabilities that later prove unnecessary.

Hardening these applications improves their security and reduces the likelihood of these defaults being used against your organisation.

Your approach to application hardening needs to strike a balance between functionality and security, ensuring that security settings aren't restricting application performance. Testing and change management is crucial to this process. Once an application is hardened, it needs to be implemented through distributed software points so the hardening is embedded.

First, take stock of the applications used by your organisation and research hardening recommendations from the vendors. Consider disabling services and capabilities that are not essential.

A vulnerability scanning tool such as Nessus, Nexpose, OpenVAS or SAINT can help to identify which services can be discontinued. Microsoft Defender for Endpoint even includes a threat and vulnerability management feature, which can detect vulnerabilities and misconfigurations in real time. Microsoft Defender for Office 365, Microsoft Defender Application Guard, or Microsoft Defender for Cloud Apps are also among the tools that Insight can help your organisation deploy as part of this strategy.

Starting your journey

The first and most vital step towards achieving cyber maturity is to understand your position. This is why the first thing we do at Insight when consulting with customers is to conduct a current state assessment and a gap analysis. This helps us understand where an organisation is on its security maturity journey and create a roadmap towards achieving its desired state.

The Essential Eight framework includes a helpful maturity model that details different levels of security controls. Which level you aim for depends on your current security maturity and your organisation's



risk appetite. There's no one-size-fits-all approach other than to have a step-by-step strategy to reach an acceptable level of security maturity across all eight strategies first, and then continually improve upon them to reach your target level of maturity.

Beyond the Essential Eight, people are the most important consideration when it comes to cybersecurity. Ransomware continues to be a big risk, and users are often targeted in security attacks. Training and awareness are therefore crucial to mitigating this risk in your organisation.

Of course, reaching the desired level of security maturity requires choosing and deploying the right tools for

your needs. These tools may in fact already be in your arsenal, and data-driven insights can help use them to their full potential. At Insight, we help organisations make the most of their existing investments in the Microsoft software ecosystem to vastly improve their security maturity.

Optimising the cybersecurity of your organisation is an ongoing journey to new levels of maturity, and these few basic strategies will go a long way towards keeping you on the right track.

[Find out more about how Insight can support you on your way, or reach out to us with your cybersecurity consulting needs.](#)



About the authors



Cameron Zivkovic

Practice Lead, Cloud Security & Infrastructure - Insight

Cameron brings over 12 years of experience in designing and implementing cloud infrastructure and security solutions, specialising in the Microsoft security and identity product suite. His goal is to create simple, cost-effective solutions that provide the maximum amount of value to organisations.



Sam Hitchiner

Senior Consultant, Security – Insight

Sam leverages 15+ years of experience in ICT to drive Security and Privacy initiatives by aligning the solutions to business needs for judicious outcomes. He is passionate about protecting the digital estate in the Cloud and works extensively in the Microsoft ecosystem for a secure future.

Microsoft Sentinel Foundations

Gain control and visibility of your entire IT security environment

The proliferation of platforms, data, users and mobility is creating new challenges for security teams. Visibility and manageability are hard to attain, let alone staying on top of endless alerts and tool updates.

Microsoft Sentinel lets you combine and analyse security data from all your users, endpoints and infrastructure to make threat protection smarter and faster.

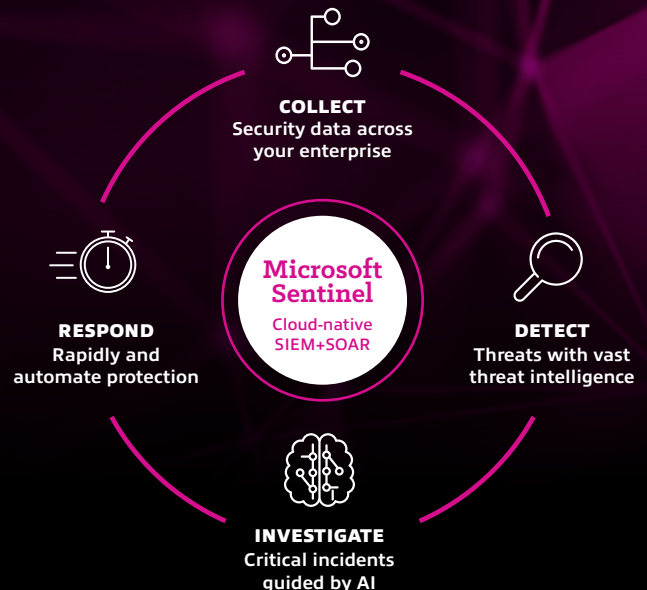
HOW WE HELP

Insight's Microsoft Sentinel Foundations offers expert-led workshops that combine training and assessment of your security environment.

Centred around best practices for cloud and security, this engagement familiarise your team with new technology and provide you with a working environment you can begin using right away.

BENEFITS

- Collect security data across your enterprise
- Detect threat with vast threat intelligence
- Respond rapidly and automate protection



[Learn more about Insight's Microsoft Sentinel Foundations](#)



Christchurch City Council

finds new insight in SAM

Colin Lawrence is blunt: "You can't manage what you can't see."

It's a well-used tenet, but for Colin, Christchurch City Council IT Asset Management Team Lead, an Insight-hosted Snow software asset management (SAM) solution has provided unparalleled visibility and management of the council's software and hardware portfolio. This visibility has provided a range of optimisation and cost avoidance capabilities across their on-premise and cloud assets.

Problem: We've got the tools, but not the visibility

Colin took on his role at the Council, which provides services for the city of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula, in March 2020, charged with bringing structure to the asset management team and providing better visibility and management of IT assets.

What he found was an organisation with tools, including a service management tool with a configuration management database, but which still had only limited visibility.

Using SQL scripts specific to IT asset management allowed Colin to get

some information from SCCM, but without a lot of configuration and constant configuration work to keep it up to date, usage data wasn't available.

Council agreed. After research, Colin settled on two potential vendors and went to market to find an integrator – one that didn't already sell to the council.

"Ours is a due diligence role and I don't want people giving me advice about my due diligence who have a vested interest in the outcome," he says.

"Snow came out on top in a weighted average between the two products and Insight were the best proposer out of the group, so we moved with them."

"If we didn't get the right tools, it would cost more in trying to recruit staff to get what we wanted to do and we still wouldn't get the results council was after."



Solution: Intelligent technology and a meaningful partnership

Evette Thorp, Insight New Zealand Practice Lead Infrastructure & Software Solutions Services, says Colin had clear goals.

“He had done his case of why they needed SAM, had investigated the options from a toolset perspective and was very aware that a tool is just a tool and you are still going to need IP in the form of licensing and SAM expertise that they are not necessarily going to have in-house to wrap around that,” she says.

Rather than a fully managed solution, Insight suggested a hosted SAM solution using Snow with design and implementation and the addition of a set number of hours available of Insight consultants’ time, on an as-needed basis.

“Rather than a fully managed solution we are setting them up for success and then once they are comfortable with the level of expertise internally, they will continue to manage it themselves,” says Rachael Lattimore, Insight New Zealand Account Manager. “But when they need a SAM specialist, they have prepaid for a bucket of consulting funds they can draw down on.”

Working with CCC, Insight’s team established the Snow platform within the CCC environment – the effective establishment of the

SAM Platform enables complete and accurate data collection for CCC. This transition was led by the Insight transition team utilising project management best practice methodology.

“We put the system live and immediately we had transparency. We were able to see what we had, where we had it, and who was using it.”

*Colin Lawrence
Team Leader IT Asset Management*

The results showed a lot of duplication and multiplication of apps.

“We had multiple versions along with duplicate types of software. By the time you took all the versioning in across the board we had something like 2000 instances.” The council had thought it had 742 instances, with around 240 pure apps.

“I don’t think we will save money, but I think we will avoid spend, we will improve productivity by re-spending that money on better tools for people to do the things they need to do more effectively and efficiently.”

*Colin Lawrence,
Team Leader IT Asset Management*

Results: Better forecasting, more efficient spend

Being able to see for the first time the true extent of the software assets provided Colin and his team with the ability to mitigate risks from dated or unpatched software.

“That was a biggie for me from day one: We saw usage, we saw how stuff was being consumed and to what quantum, and from that we could start doing some things positively about that”.

“We are at the end of our three-year contract so our true-up allowed us to go into contract a little differently and we have done the same with other software as we moved through.” Within the first month Christchurch City Council had cost avoided enough to pay for the consumption of Snow.

The Council spends around \$12 million per annum on software. “I think I can cost avoid 5% of that,” Colin says.

Getting information on in-cloud software – including shadow IT, had also been a challenge with the council’s hosted environment. Now, it’s all at the team’s fingertips.

“What we’re really looking at is risk assessment.”

That extends to hardware, where the Council has been able to quickly decommission unused devices.

Snow, with its capability to define end of support, end of extended support and end of life, has enabled the Council to measure the risk per the lifecycle of the software, rather than measuring N-1.

“The rationalisation, optimisation, standardisation is what we are after,” Colin says. He cites the example of text editors. The council had 10 being used by its 2,500 strong workforce. While no one editor can provide everything for all, he says having two to three will be sufficient.

The system is also enabling hardware and mobile device optimisation, providing visibility of who is using which device, how often and what is installed on it. Rolling out new devices is simplified, says Lawrence: “We just get them out there because Snow will tell us who has them, where they are and how they are using them.”

For the IT Asset Management team, the hosted Snow offering means Christchurch City Council can forecast better, model different scenarios better and look at the physical spend to a greater degree.

“The visibility is absolutely paramount. We can see it now, so you can define whether you have a problem or not. And secondly, we can report and report easily and factually against what we know is out there and being

used. So that means we can target what is not being used.

"I'm extremely happy with what it is allowing us to do and I'm extremely happy with what it will allow us to do over the next two to three years. I'm not naive enough to think it will be the panacea to all, we will make some good benefits over the next 18-24 months then it will start to plateau. But by that stage you should have attuned some of your operational characteristics so that your monitoring role becomes easier and you're just steering a finely tuned ship and just making sure that you don't deviate and get back into bad habits again."



As to Insight's role, "I don't look for a vendor, I look for a partner. I look for someone who is willing to travel the journey with me. And I'm very happy with what we have got – both in terms of the product and the folks I'm dealing with."

Colin Lawrence

Team Leader IT Asset Management

Software Asset Management as a Service

Gaining visibility, insight and advice

SAM services utilise Insight proprietary tools and leading third party solutions either as-a-service or on-premise. Our experts provide visibility, insight and advice on software usage, compliance and wastage helping reduce both cost and risk.

Data & Tooling

Implementation, management and support for a range of SAM technologies and associated data sources.

Compliance & Remediation

Determining exposures and shelf-wares with guidance and advice to improve the position.

Monitor & Advise

From a single product to whole environment level, providing scorecards, diagnosis and assessments of a variety of risks, trends and opportunities. Helping you to advise business stakeholders and take informed decisions.

Reclamation & Assignment

Management of licence pools and re-allocation of deployments to reduce demand and minimise wastage.

Audit Support

Managing the scope and process of delivering a vendor or internal software audit, with recommendations where you need to take management decisions.

Cloud & SaaS Cost Management

Monitoring of consumption, spend and trends with ongoing improvement recommendations.

Cost Allocation

Support for internal billing and cost allocation, with options to support how you invest and pay for software.



Software Asset Management as a Service, helping you to focus on decisions.

Top 4 Device Priorities for IT Leaders in 2022

Discover the IT trends that will shape the future of endpoint management and influence device priorities in 2022.



The proliferation of remote work in 2020 sent mobile device numbers soaring. And the trend won't be slowing down any time soon. In fact, the number of mobile devices worldwide is expected to reach nearly 16 billion in 2022 and increase to over 18 billion by 2025.

Our dependence on mobile devices will continue to grow in the coming years as edge technologies, Internet

of Things (IoT) and 6G networking innovations change the way we do business. The devices you select today — and how you choose to manage them — will shape the success or failure of your business going forward.

With that caveat firmly in mind, let's explore the top four device priorities you should consider when it comes to device procurement and management this year.

1 Secure endpoints anywhere.

Security is the leading priority for most organisations these days — and for good reason.

43% of surveyed companies suffered a cyberattack in 2020.



Ransomware attacks increased by 150% in 2020.



Ransomware victims paid out 300% more to cybercriminals in 2020.

Now that corporate devices and company data are leveraged outside the physical borders of the office, security has become much more complex. As Joe Flynn, director of technical architecture at Insight, explains:

“The old way of enforcing security doesn’t work when the office isn’t the central hub anymore. A dispersed workforce means every employee’s home, and every personal device accessing company data, is a new office in need of security.”

So, what can you do to create security borders around a borderless workforce? We recommend deploying cloud-ready devices tied to a modern endpoint management platform. Modern endpoint management enables you to “protect at the door,” which means

three things:

- Secure at the user level with protections such as Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), Single Sign-On (SSO) and behavioral analysis.
- Secure at the content level with protections such as data classification, asset tagging and access management.
- Secure at the device level with protections such as encryption, update management and endpoint governance.

Your people play a critical role.

When it comes to endpoint security, your people are your both your weakness and your secret weapon. According to the [2021 Hiscox Cyber Readiness Report](#), 65% of ransomware attacks are initiated by a phishing email.

No matter how tight your security is, it won’t do much good if an employee inadvertently opens the back door by clicking a malicious link. That’s why it’s essential to train your workforce to recognise and report suspicious emails, fostering a culture of security.

You want security tools that enable the level of security you’re comfortable with, but also give your workers a flexible and simple experience, where they can be productive anywhere.



Joe Flynn

Director of Technical Architecture, Insight



Security and employee experience: a balancing act

While the importance of security can't be overstated, there is such a thing as too much security. According to Forrester, "Many companies inadvertently make it as difficult as possible for employees to access enterprise data for security reasons."

Locking down your systems and data may sound like a good idea, but not if it limits employee productivity. The trick is to land on a security posture that's strong enough for your needs without being a hindrance to your workforce.

2 Improve employee experience.

The advent of the pandemic and the growth of remote work has led many workers to reassess where they put their time and energy.

Employees are no longer content to simply put in their time at a company and hope for a good return. They're looking for fulfilling work experiences

with healthy work-life balance and great benefits — and they're willing to leave their current employers to get it.

This is The Great Resignation and it's affecting organisations everywhere.

75% 

of executives say The Great Resignation has affected their financial stability.



A record **4.5 million American workers quit their jobs** in November 2021.



The average cost of a single resignation is **\$11,372**.

What can IT leaders do to help offset the trend and improve employee retention? Start by examining your pay and benefits, which play a big role in

Talent has high expectations with today's technology, and there are so many options available to deliver a great experience without compromising security or productivity.



Adam Duffy
Services Product Manager,
Insight

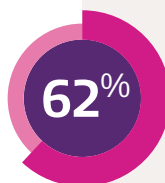
talent attraction. But, when it comes to retention, employee experience is king.

According to a study by [The Predictive Index](#), "Companies that prioritise the employee experience — whether through benefits, flexibility, inclusion or a sense of purpose — see clear reductions in turnover compared to their peers."

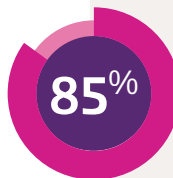
Your technology matters.

Technology can make or break your employee experience. If employees can easily access everything they need to get their job done anywhere, that's a good technology experience. If tech is slow, unreliable or difficult to access, the only thing employees will experience is frustration.

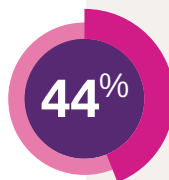
Since consumer technology delivers such a great customer experience, employees expect the same from their workplace technology. Anything less is simply unacceptable.



of employees say having the right device ecosystem makes them more motivated and engaged.



of workers want their organisations to provide them with an ecosystem of tested, supported devices and accessories.



of employees say they would leave an organisation with substandard technology.

According to a recent [Microsoft report](#), 41% of the global workforce will consider resigning in the next year. Delivering a modern technology experience with devices employees want to use may help your organisation retain more of its workforce.

3 Optimise IT spending.

Driving down IT costs is always a priority for business leaders. However, this year, the focus isn't so much on reducing costs as it is on optimising spending. Gartner predicts that worldwide [IT spending will actually grow 5.1% in 2022](#).

While IT budgets are healthier this year, leaders will need help to prioritise projects and reallocate funds accordingly. John-David Lovelock, distinguished research vice president at Gartner, says, "2022 is the year that the

future returns for the CIO ... They are now in a position to move beyond the critical, short-term projects over the past two years and focus on the long term."

For long-term projects that will yield the greatest Return on Investment (ROI), we recommend:

- Optimising the device lifecycle
- Consolidating IT vendors
- Updating legacy systems and processes

Legacy systems just don't cut it — they lack security, they lack the ability to connect users and they're incapable of giving end users the experience they need.



Joe Flynn

Director of Technical Architecture, Insight

47%

of IT leaders want to improve the way they use providers to streamline hardware lifecycles.

47%

of enterprises are managing more than 10 vendor relationships.

83%

of IT leaders say it's not easy to manage their multi-vendor environment.

Why optimise the device lifecycle?

Most organisations have inefficiencies in how they procure, deploy, maintain and recycle devices. By optimising your device lifecycle process, you can drastically reduce the time it takes to deploy devices and reduce your Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) as well.

Why consolidate IT vendors?

Having multiple vendors adds complexity to your environment and makes management more difficult. Plus, multi-vendor relationships are expensive to maintain. For example, many companies have multiple platforms to manage devices from multiple manufacturers. With how much it costs to maintain in-house expertise in all these areas, working with one partner who can manage all your IT needs saves money.

Why update legacy technology?

Legacy systems are often the biggest drain on IT resources. Maintaining an outdated system requires a highly specialised skillset, which can be hard to source and often comes at a high price. Legacy systems also lack modern security, leaving your organisation vulnerable to cyberattacks. Staying with legacy technology will cost you more in the long run through increased security risks and losses in productivity.

4

Make way for modern management.

Many IT leaders are fully occupied by the needs and challenges of daily IT operations. But the only businesses that will thrive in the future are those that make time for modern management now.

The explosion of data and devices is just getting started. Consider these forecasts from Gartner:



The number of IoT devices will triple from 2020 to 2030, growing at a **compound annual growth rate of 11%**.



By 2025, **more than 50%** of enterprise-managed data will be created and processed outside the data centre or cloud.



By 2025, **25% of edge networks will be breached**, up from less than 1% in 2021.



Thoughts from our partners

On the new security perimeter:

In a post-pandemic world, the endpoint is the new perimeter. Therefore, state-of-the-art Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) is becoming a requirement in the anywhere workspace.



Tom Gillis

SVP/GM Network & Advanced Security Business Group, VMware

On the value of IT:

The future of work is now. IT teams are the heroes of today's new working environment, empowering employees to work from anywhere.



Sumeer Chandra

Global Head and General Manager, Personal Systems Services, HP Inc.

On the state of today's IT departments:

I don't think there's an IT department in the world that has more resources than work. We're all trying to get more done every day with fewer resources.



Jefferson Raley

VP of Commercial Client Services Portfolio, Dell Technologies

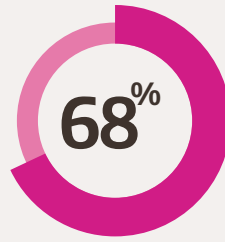
To prepare for this rapid expansion of devices at the edge, organisations need to implement modern management solutions sooner rather than later. As the same Gartner report concludes:

“Digital transformation necessitates extending and distributing the digital enterprise to the edge — where customers and employees, and buildings and enterprise assets are located — and connecting everything and everyone digitally.”

You’re gonna need backup.

The move to modern management is unique to every organisation. Those that are agile and cloud-ready may need little help to complete the transformation, while organisations suffering from heavy technical debt may need more assistance to update legacy systems and improve processes.

In light of The Great Resignation, good talent may be hard to come by for a while. Yet, the IT department’s responsibilities continue to grow. If your company could use some guidance on how to transition to modern management, or if you just need a few extra hands to manage the workload, you can get the support you need with Insight.



of surveyed IT leaders said their department has taken on new responsibilities around procurement since February of 2020.

More than one-third of IT professionals said device procurement, deployment and management have felt “very challenging” during the pandemic.



of companies needed help with talent acquisition and retention over the past 12 months.

[Learn more about how Insight can help accelerate your journey to modern management](#)

Insight Managed Services Support

Realise the ongoing value of cloud-oriented technology solutions

Managed IT services

From one-off technical assistance to long-term outsourced management, we'll work with you to improve your IT operations and realise the ongoing value of cloud-oriented technology solutions.

[Learn more about Insight Managed IT Services](#)

Balancing today's tasks and tomorrow's transformation

Insight Managed Services Support provides the right balance of people, processes, and tools across our Australian and global technical teams to deliver both proactive and reactive services.

How we help:

- Proactive Monitoring and Event Management
- 24x7 coverage for high priority Incidents
- Availability Management
- Cloud cost optimisation
- Capacity Management
- Roadmap Planning

How **DirectAsia** digitally **transformed** and **optimised** IT costs with Insight



Among the many lessons driven home by the pandemic, has been the value – in fact necessity – of agility. It is no longer a ‘nice to have’, it’s now a business imperative in a world where changes are coming faster than ever before – and more abruptly too as new restrictions and plans are introduced to grapple with Covid.

Edgar Lun Pum, DirectAsia Infrastructure and Solution Manager says the Singapore-based insurance

services company’s IT infrastructure was an old, on-premise design back in 2019.

The company, an offshoot of London Stock Exchange specialist insurance group Hiscox, launched in Singapore in 2010 with a goal of changing the face of insurance in Asia by offering customers quick, convenient, jargon-free online travel, car and home insurance and providing direct access to enable them to manage their policies.

Situation

Back in 2019, DirectAsia's IT infrastructure was, in Edgar's words, 'too traditional'.

"We had about 185 servers – which is a lot for a small setup." Most of the servers were virtual machines, with around 40 physical servers.

Some of the legacy on-premises Windows servers, including Microsoft Exchange 201x servers, were nearing end of life, and there was a complex array of legacy licensing.

"Over the last three years we have been revamping the company to make it more agile and more approachable to customers and we need technology to help us with that," Edgar says.

He wanted technology which would be more agile, easier and faster to redeploy, enabling DirectAsia itself, to be all those things. For DirectAsia, as for many companies, that means a hybrid platform combining both cloud services with some on-premise servers.

"We needed to make ourselves more agile, a more effective team. Being an on-premise datacentre was consuming too much time for the team to support and maintain the hardware, because you had to do patching, upgrade devices... It was taking too much time," he says.

Edgar Lun Pum
DirectAsia Infrastructure
and Solution Manager

The company's IT team – comprising 20 developers and 13 on the infrastructure side – is also embracing Continuous Integration, Continuous Deployment (CICD), and needed technology that would support that.

"To move to cloud, to hybrid, obviously was the next step, but we lacked the most important thing which is resource – the knowledge, the know-how, the skills."

In order to get his team upskilled in cloud, Edgar wanted to engage with a knowledgeable partner who could help DirectAsia not just by selling them the right technology, but also providing advice and guidance.

Solution

Edgar called on Insight's services, in what was the start of an ongoing partnership and a critical part of the company's digital transformation to cloud.

With Insight's help, DirectAsia deployed resources into Microsoft Azure, using Active Directory on cloud to help eliminate costly server purchases.

Insight helped DirectAsia get Microsoft credits, enabling the company to deploy resources in Azure for the first couple of months to test the water, before diving in fully.

A move to Office 365 including Teams and SharePoint for collaboration and Word, PowerPoint, Excel and OneNote for productivity, quickly followed.



The old Microsoft Exchange Servers were decommissioned, and mailboxes moved to Office 365 Outlook.

It wasn't just the technology though, with license consultation a critical part of the project.

"They helped us with the licenses, guiding us and instructing us on what was the best approach," Edgar says. "Their support was vital to help make decisions because some of the licensing models with Azure and Office 365 were very confusing."

"In Azure there was CSP (Cloud Service Provider) or EA (Enterprise Agreement), or pay as you go, and with Office 365 there was Enterprise or Business."

"Insight clarified it for us, explained the options and different models and advised us on the best fit".

Edgar Lun Pum
DirectAsia Infrastructure
and Solution Manager

All up, 300 Business Standard Licenses were deployed, along with 30 E3 licenses.

Debby Toh, Insight Partner Manager, says *"Because we are well versed in terms of the Microsoft licensing and also have an internal services team, we can effectively assist customers to manage their cost optimisation around their IT."*

Adds Tiffany Cheah, Insight Account Manager: *"We can provide the license consultation to ensure clients are purchasing the licenses most appropriate to their environment, rather than just upselling the most expensive license. This is an area where Insight's knowledge works really well."*

Results

Edgar says the move to cloud and Office 365 has been 'brilliant' for DirectAsia's staff.

With Covid forcing staff to work from home, technology like Office 365 and Dynamics 365, which has since been deployed along with other SaaS products, have enabled DirectAsia's

teams to remain efficient and effective no matter where they're working.

"Nowadays, this approach is very welcome for most of the staff and department managers, and they prefer to have the hybrid environment where some come into the office, some work at home – wherever they feel they are more effective."

But perhaps above all else, the company now has the agility it was seeking. Edgar says it is launching new pure-cloud offerings, including customer portals currently in quality assurance and user acceptance testing, which will enable the company to remove another five or six physical servers from its datacentre.

"If we are deploying a new website, for example, with the new services we can do it in a matter of hours, rather than weeks, because it's in cloud."

Edgar Lun Pum
DirectAsia Infrastructure
and Solution Manager

Edgar is open that DirectAsia, like any company, wants to be efficient with its money and carefully analyses and compares options before making any technology decisions, comparing several vendors and options before selecting the best.

The move to cloud has reduced the maintenance fees as well as removing the cost of hardware upgrades.

DirectAsia is now embarking on further projects as it continues its digital transformation. First up is enabling Enterprise Voice in Microsoft Teams which will be deployed across Singapore and Thailand.

"There are a lot of things going on this year and Insight will be a big partner for us," Edgar says.

He notes Insight is 'more of a business partner than a sales partner'.

"They have the knowledge and the services offering to back up the products, and we really appreciate their collaboration because it helps us balance the process of learning the technology, while getting advice from them as well.

"They've been vital in helping us with decision making and guiding us, and they've been very proactive in arranging product presentations from vendors or partners and following up everything," Edgar says.

"Insight have helped move us from a very traditional IT infrastructure to a more modern hybrid environment during these difficult times. The Microsoft technologies have also helped us to work and operate better and for the company to be more productive now and in the future."

Edgar Lun Pum
DirectAsia Infrastructure
and Solution Manager

Complexity is the arch enemy of security

Yet 78% of organisations use more than 50 cybersecurity products to protect their environment¹



4 ways Microsoft 365 E5 protects users, data, apps, and devices

1 Advanced threat protection

Think of threat protection as the security around the front door of your organisation, like CCTV. For the proactive prevention of breaches, Microsoft 365 E5 monitors identities, endpoints, user data and documents, cloud apps and infrastructure.



2 Identity and access management (IAM)

With person-based security incidents increasing in frequency and severity,² IAM is the cornerstone of any security platform.

3 Information protection

Locate and classify information anywhere it lives or travels, with information protection taking place at the file level.

4 Security management

Microsoft 365 E5 integrates your productivity and security tools for simpler management.

¹ CIO, 2020, *Cybersecurity threats are exploding exponentially; how IAM can assist*; ² KPMG, 2021, *The Changing Shape of Ransomware*

Secure your business today

To find out more or get started with Microsoft 365 E5, get in touch with an Insight security specialist on 1800 671 118.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

finds insight in multi-cloud management and billing



Daniel Chong, General Manager, Innovation and Technology at West Kowloon Cultural District Authority says multi-cloud management and billing is a hassle to the IT operation.

A statutory body responsible for developing and managing the 40-hectare cultural complex designed to be the cultural and arts centre

for Hong Kong and worldwide, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) will ultimately include 17 venues. It brings together local and international artists and audiences through the provided platforms for expression and opportunities for collaboration and fostering the organic growth of Hong Kong's artistic, creative and design industries.



西九文化區管理處
West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

Ten venues with buildings in the complex, including the Xique Centre for Chinese opera, the M+ Museum, the Freespace and Art Park are already open for contemporary performance, exhibitions, workshops and events. The Hong Kong Palace Museum will open this year, followed by the Lyric Theatre in 2024/25, creating a cultural and collaboration hub for artists not just for Hong Kong, but for Asia and the wider world.

Situation

With its wide breadth and scope, multiple venues and customers including both visitors and artists, comes significant technology – and cloud – needs.

“The majority of our systems are on the cloud,” Daniel says. That includes Salesforce for customer relationship management, Oracle enterprise resource planning and Workday, with systems running across AWS, Azure and Tencent’s clouds.

“We have so many different cloud systems and we had a headache on the administration side because of the budget constraint,” Daniel says.

The WKCDA spends millions of dollars on cloud hosting services per annum.



“It is quite huge for us, compared with a small firm,” Daniel notes.

But Daniel had another issue to contend with: He was receiving big invoices from different cloud vendors without breakdowns by individual system or departments within WKCDA.

“We couldn’t figure out how much we spent on each of the individual systems, or by department to analyse the utilisation for future planning.”

With the cloud contracts less than half-way through, more than half of the money allocated had already been used up which drew serious concern to the IT management for desperate action.

“I needed someone to help me to do some forecasts on how much spending was left for the coming few months or the rest of the contract. It is not easy for WKCDA internal staff to do it without the access to the system, without the experience on that.”



It was a problem that left Daniel unable to give his board all the information he wanted to provide. He also wanted to be able to tell each of the business partners, such as the M+ Museum, how much they were spending and provide information on how they could ensure they were getting value for money, reducing spend if it wasn't justified.

"I wanted to be able to look into the individual applications for each business partner and find improvements.

"We needed analysis on the traffic, so that we were able to make improvements."

Solution

Daniel turned to Insight.

The IT services provider is providing ongoing multi-cloud and billing

management, support and technical professional services for WKCDA.

"Insight is able to do the administration and analysis for the cloud systems hosting management and that resolved my problem and gives me a chance to reassign my resources to other valuable tasks as well," Daniel says.

Insight has provided architecture guidance on the setup of hosting platforms, according to business application requirements, and highlighted inconsistent environment configurations.

"They told us for example that we had some of the development machines unnecessarily turned on and that was spending some of the contract amount unnecessarily.

"It's a simple thing, but without Insight's experience and assistance we may not have discovered that."

Sara Ng, Insight Sales Manager, says Insight's work has included providing network configuration, Domain Name Service, load balancer, VPN setup and Content Distribution Network configuration and security profiles settings, along with assisting with the deployment of middle-ware, business applications and APIs from Source Control Management (SCM) tools with the use of DevOps.

Insight's involvement with WKCDA has extended beyond the multi-cloud billing and management, with Daniel noting that Insight has helped with other projects, including valuable work on security and with website performance testing.

"The performance test for our website was a major thing, alongside the administration on the cloud hosting," Daniel says.

Many of WKCDA's visitors from Mainland China were reporting difficulties with WKCDA's website, including booking tickets, because the site was 'too slow'. It wasn't a problem they were seeing in Hong Kong, however.

"We sought help from Insight to see whether we could conduct performance tests locally in China, because without that we couldn't get the problem resolved."

Insight found a partner in China and the performance testing was done in a number of major cities. Analysis showed it wasn't an issue with WKCDA's site.

Insight's reach was also invaluable in enabling WKCDA to pay the partner in China – something it couldn't do directly as it has no local representative or business partners in China.

"But Insight resolved that for us as well."

The company also worked with WKCDA's security teams to review security profile settings to fit with the latest business application requirements and implement security settings according to requirements from business applications and security measures by the WKCDA.

Results

Insight's administration hasn't just made it easier for Daniel to provide valuable information to his board and his business partners.

"We are, first of all, able to make sure our costs are kept in a reasonable manner and are spent in a reasonable manner. Secondly, we can make sure the systems are fully utilised and deployed as expected," he says.

"I don't want to have a system that is a waste and not being fully used by the users or the public.

"Some of our systems, like Salesforce, are quite expensive and we want to get the return on that investment, but up until now we could not get a solid plan because we didn't have a clear view of where exactly the spend was.

There's also the overall cost saving – money which can be redeployed elsewhere, Chong notes.

“We are hoping to reduce costs around 20 percent,” he says.

But there’s more to the partnership than just cost savings and efficiencies.

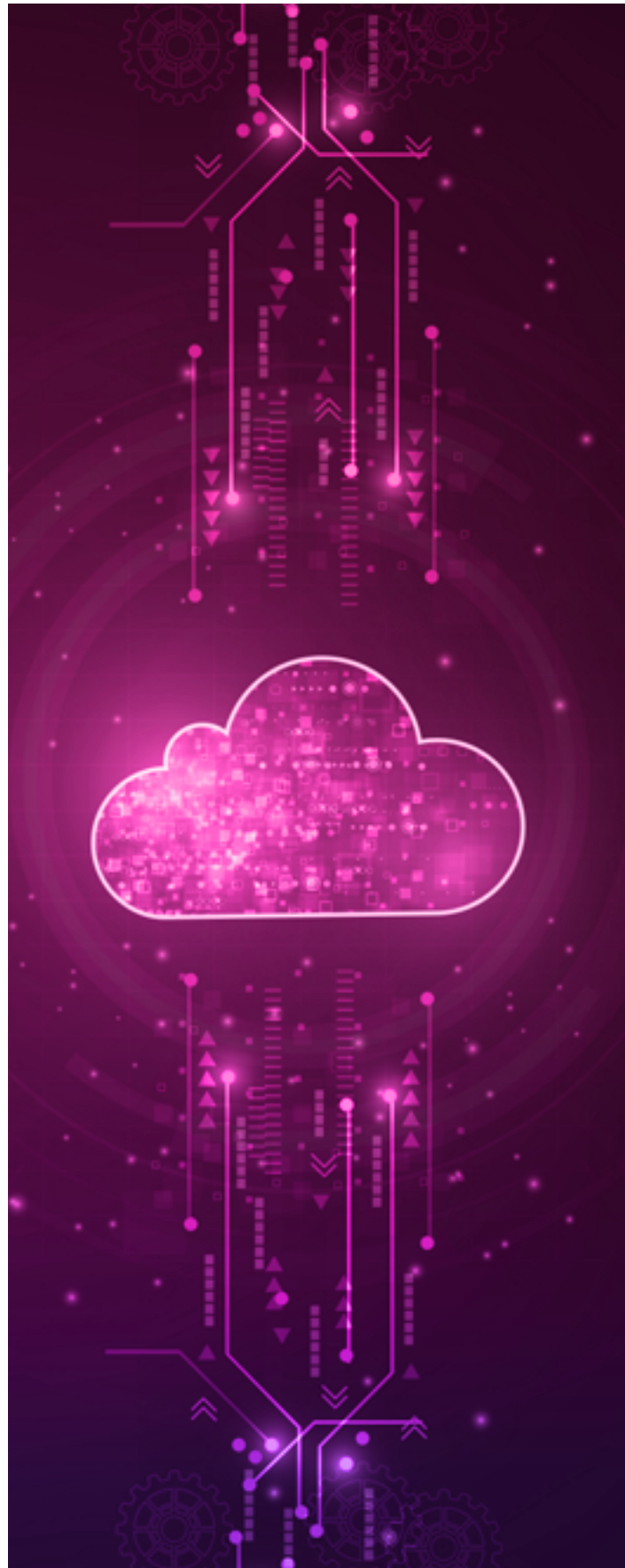
Insight is, Daniel says, a true business partner for WKCDA.

“Whenever we have a problem they will get back to us promptly and they won’t talk cost first, they talk about the solution and understand our problem first. That is great. They treat us as a partner, rather than a commercial customer.

“Others sometimes consider things as outside the project scope and immediately say they have to additionally charge. I don’t like that. What we need to have is a business partner, and that’s what we have with Insight,” he says.

“They are experienced, knowledgeable and helpful. And they’re also able to line up other parties to assist us when needed, which is something I really appreciate.”

Adds Sara: “With Insight’s breadth of services and geographic reach, we have been able to address their requests on different developments, for example if they have concerns about security, we have the resources to support them. If they have training needs, we can also support them.”



A New Era of Empowering Hybrid Learning

With remote learning on the rise, resilience and flexibility are necessary. Discover solutions that enable schools and universities to ramp up distance learning quickly.

The challenges facing schools are greater than ever — but, now that students and educators have adapted rapidly to remote education, it's clear that hybrid learning is here to stay. As some students return to campus, schools are embracing a blend of remote and in-person education for the future. And, even before the pandemic, enthusiasm for this new learning paradigm was growing.

Setting up an online learning infrastructure and deploying new technologies can be hard — but embracing the hybrid classroom creates a holistic, reimagined learning

experience that enables all students to continue high-quality education regardless of other factors.

The hybrid learning environment is student-focused and driven by technology, ensuring equity, well-being and quality of learning through an approach that is:

- Multimodal and interactive
- Both synchronous and asynchronous
- Conducive to active engagement
- Agile enough to include all students
- Built on thoughtfully planned infrastructure



Modern
Architecture

Driving digital learning forward

In the hybrid education era, schools and universities are exploring solutions that establish a strong foundation for blended learning to empower all students to succeed.

It can be challenging to achieve sustainable, inclusive learning at scale while recognising the unique needs of specific learning communities. That's why leading technology partners like Microsoft meet schools across the globe wherever they are in their education modernisation journey.

For decades, Microsoft has served as a philanthropic and strategic partner to schools and universities worldwide, with:

- 1000+** free learning paths to help teach technology skills
- 400+** engineers building education-specific technologies
- \$1.2B+** in software and services donated to 90,000 nonprofits
- \$75M+** donated to YouthSpark to improve digital literacy
- 110+** nonprofits partnering with Microsoft to reach millions of learners

Enabling hybrid learning around the globe

Since the new learning paradigm is growing worldwide, Microsoft designed solutions that help schools and universities tackle remote learning challenges with technologies that integrate seamlessly with existing infrastructure. With the goal to empower

every student to achieve more, Microsoft enables hybrid learning with:



COMMITMENT

Office 365 A1, including Teams, is always available for schools at no cost.



SUPPORT

There's always a dedicated Microsoft expert available to guide educators and students through onboarding and training.



INCLUSION

Over 23 million people with dyslexia and learning disabilities worldwide trust Microsoft Immersive Reader, which offers 85 read-aloud languages.

Inclusive learning in a digital hub with Teams

Built for education, Microsoft Teams combines all necessary resources into one space. It brings together online classes, assignments, files, collaboration and built-in accessibility tools, all in a central hub integrated with your Learning Management System (LMS).

Teams establishes hybrid learning with integrated capabilities, including:

- Collaboration on files
- Tracking student progress
- Gathering responses in polls and forms
- Posting assignments
- Hosting and recording virtual classes
- Scheduling meetings
- Chatting with students and peers
- Setting up Teams as a learning experience platform

Microsoft Windows 11 devices allow students to collaborate anywhere.

Designed for experiential and accessible learning with LTE options, low-cost Windows 11 devices feature long-lasting battery, powerful processors, HD cameras and laptop-to-tablet options on certain models, giving students and educators the tools they need during remote and in-person learning.

Windows devices foster more accessible learning.

Built to operate in a hybrid setup, Microsoft offers a broad portfolio of low-cost devices that feature the new Windows 11, unlocking an unparalleled education experience with simple deployment, management and security, plus optimised performance.

When Microsoft embraced the reality of blended learning, they reimagined Windows for the digital classroom, helping educators unlock the full potential of every student by giving them powerful tools to learn, collaborate and create in a secure, trusted environment. Windows 11 unlocks new educational experiences with features including:

- High-definition video conferencing out of the box, to support learning from anywhere with fewer disruptions
- Built-in accessibility features, such as voice typing, magnifier, color filters, narrator and real-time closed captions, at no extra cost

- Ease-of-access settings, with a single click to reduce clutter and minimise distractions
- Enhanced student independence with quick, one-click access to mic controls and sharing in Teams
- A more adaptive touchscreen and added pen functionality

Empower educators and IT staff.

With a vast selection of free online resources helping users learn to use remote learning tools and other technologies, Microsoft enables IT, educators and staff to master the flow of digital learning. Along with tutorials on Office 365 and other Microsoft solutions, Microsoft's website offers over 1,000 learning paths on innovative computer science and technology topics, while Learn Educator Centre offers free training courses, webinars and other resources.

Invest in the future of learning with Microsoft.

Furthering their commitment to learning and skills development, Microsoft has donated millions of dollars to education-focused nonprofits and engaged in numerous in-depth studies shaping the future of education. With intelligent solutions designed to ease the challenges of hybrid learning, Microsoft is leading the way for every student and educator to succeed.

Empower hybrid learning for every student with Microsoft.



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Sponsored by:  **Windows 11**

The Security Guide to Windows 11

With Windows® 11, the hardware and software work together to protect your business from the end user all the way to the cloud. Discover how Windows can keep your data and teams protected.



The Security Guide to Windows 11

Approximately 80% of security decision-makers say that software alone is not enough to protect from emerging threats.¹ Windows 11 is a Zero Trust-ready OS to protect data and access anywhere.

How Windows 11 enables Zero Trust protection



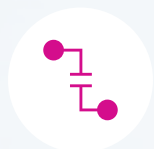
Very explicitly

The first step in Windows 11 Zero Trust protection is to verify explicitly, which means to authenticate and authorise based on all available data points, including user identity, location, device health, service, data classification and anomalies.



Use least privileged access

The second step is least-privileged access, which controls user access with just-in-time and just-enough-access, risk-based adaptive policies and data protection to secure both data and productivity.



Assume breach

Finally, the assume breach step minimises the blast radius and segments access. It also allows you to verify end-to-end encryption and use analytics to gain visibility to improve threat detection and defenses.



Security, by default

Outdated hardware leaves organisations vulnerable to attacks and security decision-makers to say believe that modern hardware protects against future attacks. Improving upon the innovations of Windows 10, Windows 11 provides additional security capabilities to meet today's evolving security landscape and enable more hybrid work and productivity. Windows 11 is designed to build a stronger foundation that's more resilient to cyberattacks.



Robust application security and privacy controls

Windows 11 has multiple layers of application security to guard critical data and code integrity. **Application isolation and controls, code integrity, privacy controls and least-privilege principles enable developers to build-in security and privacy from the ground up.**

To protect privacy, Windows 11 also provide more controls over which apps and features can collect and use data, including device location or access resources like camera and microphone.



Enhanced hardware operating system security

Keep sensitive data behind additional security barriers separated from the operating system with Windows 11. This information, including encryption keys and user credentials, is protected from unauthorised access and tampering.

Hardware and software work together in Windows 11 to protect your entire organisation with virtualisation-based security (VBS) and Secure Boot built-in and enabled by default on new CPUs. VBS uses hardware virtualisation features to create and isolate a secure region of memory from the operating system. This environment hosts multiple security solutions, greatly increasing protection from vulnerabilities and preventing the use of malicious exploits.



Secured identities

Passwords are a prime target for cybercriminals. However, **Windows 11 is changing the standard with passwordless protection.** After a secure authentication process, credentials are protected behind layers of hardware and software security. This gives users secure, passwordless access to their apps and cloud services.

End users can remove the password from their Microsoft account and use the Microsoft Authenticator App, Windows Hello, smart card or verification code sent to their phone or email. IT admins and consumers can set up Windows 11 devices as passwordless out-of-the-box.



Connecting to cloud services

Windows 11 security extends zero-trust from the end user to the cloud, enabling policies, controls, procedures and technologies that work together to protect your devices, data, applications and identities from anywhere.

Microsoft offers comprehensive cloud services for identity, storage and access management in addition to the tools to attest that any Windows device connecting to your network is trustworthy.



Zero Trust-ready OS

The acceleration of digital transformation and the evolution of remote and hybrid work brings new opportunities to organisations and their teams. Now more than ever, employees and businesses need the right tools and security to ensure business continuity. Insight and Windows 11 make it easy to stay secure with the right devices and software. Talk to an Insight specialist today to learn more.

End-to-end protection anywhere. Insight and Microsoft offer security that adapts to today's era of hybrid work.

Trending Tech

Drive business success with devices designed to boost productivity and security.



Surface Laptop Studio

The modern workplace demands more power and flexibility than ever to get things done instantly anywhere. Your employees already get this. They've been getting more done in the new hybrid workplace. With emails, chats, and meetings from anywhere, the hybrid workplace is all about getting it done—anytime, anywhere, and sometimes all at once.

The new Microsoft Surface Laptop Studio frees your teams to tackle their workload the way they choose. Microsoft's most powerful Surface Laptop ever combines incredible performance with the highest graphics horsepower of any Surface laptop in a device that's ready to take on the next challenge.



[Learn more HERE](#)



Surface Laptop Go 2

Microsoft's lightweight, stylish new laptop is designed for success in the evolving hybrid world. From wherever you work, Surface Laptop Go 2 brings portability, quality you can see and touch, and Studio Mics and HD camera to help you show up great. From getting it all done to keeping it all secured, Surface Laptop Go 2 takes your job as seriously as you do.



Take on your everyday tasks



Design that works for you



Deploy, manage, and stay secure from anywhere



Flexibility for everywhere you work

What's new

- 12.4" touchscreen display
- Improved HD camera
- 11th Gen Intel® Core™ i5
- Secured-core PC



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