

Laying a technology
foundation to better
meet customer needs

CUSTOMER
Retail Water Utility Company

LOCATION
Australia

INDUSTRY
Energy, Utilities, Oil and Gas





Challenge

- Legacy core system infrastructure hosted on-premises and facing end of life
- Risk of business interruption due to lack of support
- Requirement to increase security posture and cloud integration capabilities



Solution

- A new state-of-the-art software-defined network solution using Cisco ACI at two data centres
- DXC integration services
- A highly available enterprise infrastructure to enhance data centre capabilities



Results

- A modern foundation network platform with exceptional IT automation, visibility and control
- Reduced IT workload — just two operational management dashboards replaced many isolated monitoring and management tools
- Increased control and security across the network



Laying a technology foundation to better meet customer needs

This state government-owned retail water company provides drinking water and sewerage services to over 2 million people and more than 50,000 businesses across a 4,000-kilometre area. Sourcing bulk water for distribution to its customers from the statutory authority that controls the state's water supplies, the company also removes and treats sewage through its regional treatment plants.

“Much of the success of this project can be attributed to how the company welcomed DXC into the team. We were considered an extension of their team, with everyone working exceptionally well together to get the job done.”

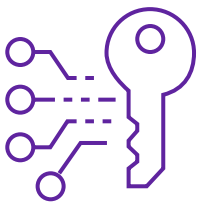
— **Sam Zahedi**
Client Account Manager
for DXC Connect

As one of the largest water retailers in the state, the company is constantly evaluating and improving how its technology can support and deliver extraordinary customer service. With a best-of-breed approach to system procurement, its choices serve its customers well in terms of reliability and security of critical services supply.

Business challenge

The retail water company is progressively transitioning to the cloud to ultimately reduce life-cycle management costs. With its existing core network infrastructure nearing end of life, the organisation was facing an increase in the risk of business interruption due to lack of support and growing cybersecurity threats. The company viewed this as an opportunity to redefine its core network into a new state-of-the-art software-defined networking solution built for today and the future.

The replacement solution needed to provide a highly available enterprise infrastructure to enhance the capabilities of the data centre environment. The company also required the ability to logically separate business applications to improve security posture, as well as extend the data centre network into the cloud. This would allow the IT team to maximise the potential of cloud services, virtualised infrastructure and enterprise mobility.



The increased control and security across the network now offers the company the comfort of knowing it can securely extend to the cloud when needed.

Solution

The retail water company selected Cisco Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI) to provide a future-ready environment for the next 10 to 15 years. ACI can be deployed under various models, including on-site and cloud-based (public, private and hybrid), allowing the company to transform to a software-defined model with ease, with workloads transferred directly to the cloud without business interruption.

The organisation wanted to work with a technology partner that could not only design the new core network, but also develop the critical processes needed to successfully deploy and migrate without interruption to vital IT and OT (operational technology) network systems.

DXC Technology's Connect Practice was selected as the preferred migration partner based on its previous success in managing data centre rebuilds/relocations and implementing software-defined networking solutions. Another key factor in the selection was DXC's ability to provide a flexible delivery model to suit the company's needs.

DXC offered an innovative, two-phased delivery model approach. Assessed by the organisation as providing the lowest risk, it comprised:

1. Design, build and test of the ACI platform (base build)
2. Migration of systems and traffic to the new network

As an authorised partner under the Cisco Services Partner Program, DXC's Connect Practice provides agile, customer-focused systems integration and design, implementation and support services, and is one of the first Cisco partners in Australia to deploy ACI to an enterprise customer.

After listening to the company's requirements, DXC knew that to capture all requirements and develop a risk-mitigated migration plan accurately, an initial scoping, design and build phase would need to be conducted, working in collaboration with the company's network team. This also provided the benefit of surety in pricing for the second phase with minimal variations to budget.

DXC brought together different stakeholder groups, including the water company's operations team, Cisco pre-sales and DXC's ACI SMEs, to understand business goals and requirements and, most important, critical dependencies and risks.

With a flexible delivery approach, DXC was able to adapt to address emerging requirements and business use cases identified during the migration planning phases. The entire team worked collaboratively to complete comprehensive planning, design and implementation activities. As a result, almost zero IT support tickets were raised.



Results and benefits

DXC worked with the water company to implement a new core software-defined network using Cisco ACI at two data centres. The leading solution provides the foundation for a highly scalable, low-downtime network environment, offering the organisation a modern platform with exceptional IT automation capabilities, visibility and control.

The increased control and security across the network now offers the company the comfort of knowing it can securely extend to the cloud when needed. The new architecture provides a hybrid plug-and-play approach with neutrality as to whether systems are hosted on-premises or in the cloud. The company's data centres, previously isolated and managed separately, can now be managed as a single, secure hosting platform.

The water company's IT team's operational workload will decrease significantly with the introduction of consolidated ACI dashboards, so they can spend more time innovating and leveraging new capabilities for the future.

A spokesperson from the retail water company said, "The measure of success in an infrastructure project like this is that no one noticed. We were pleasantly surprised at the very few requests for support received to the service desk, which was unexpected for a significant project of this scale."

Sam Zahedi, client account manager at DXC Connect, said, "Much of the success of this project can be attributed to how the company welcomed DXC into the team. We were considered an extension of their team, with everyone working exceptionally well together to get the job done."

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