



CENTRAL COAST ADVENTIST SCHOOL UPGRADES CAPABILITIES AND VALUE THROUGH SEAMLESS VSAN IMPLEMENTATION



Central Coast Adventist School

INDUSTRY
EDUCATION

LOCATION

ERINA, CENTRAL COAST, NSW
AUSTRALIA

KEY CHALLENGES

- Aging hardware
- Poor data transfer rates
- Value for money

SOLUTION

Central Coast Adventist School implemented VMware vSAN hyperconverged infrastructure and migrated VMware Horizon onto the new platform. By moving to vSAN and consolidating its hardware, the school improved storage performance and productivity, created a more manageable system, and gave itself greater capacity to scale.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Longevity of solution over at least five years meant the school could confidently budget, and easily justify the return on investment to stakeholders
- Scalability of solution allowed for a growing student population to continue to benefit
- Implementation that could take four-to-six weeks was achieved in just one, resulting in reduced disruption to the school and minimal impact to teaching

PARTNERS

BEACHHEAD
GROUP

vmware

For the Central Coast Adventist School, creating a community where students can thrive in their experience of learning is an ongoing focus. To create the best environment for learning, the school requires an IT infrastructure that can meet the demands of its growing student and staff body.

With legacy hardware in place, the school needed a refresh that would offer good value by ensuring an excellent user experience for at least five years, and that would result in a more reliable system with faster data transfer rates.

The Challenge

Today's students are growing up as digital natives and are used to rapid access to data and fast internet speeds, having grown up with consumer-grade technology in their homes. They are set to take their digital-first attitude with them into the workforce and help drive transformation, so schools are integrating more technology into the classroom. This is with the aim of educating students in better ways of working, improving communication between teachers and students, and providing interfaces to access innovative learning tools easily and quickly.

Teachers are pushing to make use of these new means for improving student engagement, asking for digital resources to be made available to them to enact personalised learning and improve their teaching. EdTech is being rolled out in schools to allow them to innovate in the way they work, such as quickly marking tests via an iPad, briefing homework through an online portal, or gaining access to a new world of teaching materials.

Central Coast Adventist School has around 1,150 users on-site at any one time, each expecting a seamless experience in their interactions with technology on campus, whilst craving exciting new ways to learn.

"Our student and staff body has grown consistently over the past two years," said Grant Lovell, ICT Manager at Central Coast Adventist School. "To meet these demands, we need to ensure that our systems remain reliable, up-to-date and scalable, so that we can adapt to changes in capacity and performance requirements as-and-when they arise."

With four years having passed since its last upgrade, the school was running legacy hardware across three production hosts and one backup host, supporting around 25 virtual servers and 100 Horizon desktop VM's. The school's hardware was becoming out-of-date - delivering poor data transfer rates that were impacting the user experience of staff and students.

To address these challenges, the school approached Beachhead Group for a solution that was tailored, priced for its needs, and had the capability to maintain performance for at least the next five years.

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“The demands being placed on school IT systems are becoming increasingly intensive, so data transfer rates and scalability are top priorities for us. We’ve used this platform for over a year now and the VMware vSAN build by Beachhead has really delivered. We can say with the benefit of hindsight that the return on investment has been excellent.”

GRANT LOVELL
ICT MANAGER, CENTRAL COAST ADVENTIST SCHOOL

VMWARE FOOTPRINT

VMware vSAN HCI
VMware Horizon

The Solution

Central Coast Adventist School wanted to continue using a scalable, reliable platform to support its virtual infrastructure. On the advice of the Beachhead Group and as an existing VMware customer, the school decided to move to a hyper-converged infrastructure through vSAN and migrate the incumbent VMware Horizon solution onto this platform.

Having compared competitor alternatives through other school reference sites, it was clear that VMware vSAN offered the best value and most effective system to consolidate performance and cut down on hardware, all on a simplified platform. Additionally, the school received the benefits of VMware education pricing.

Before arriving on-site, Beachhead carried out groundwork and performance testing ahead of the deployment to enable the quickest speed to solution use possible. This allowed for the deployment of VMware vSAN as a total turnkey solution in one week, taking just two days for the hardware install and completing the migration of all data from old to new hardware within four days.

“The planning and preparation from Beachhead Group prior to the deployment meant that a project that would ordinarily take four-to-six weeks came to be realised in just one. The result of this was reduced disruption to the school and minimal impact to teaching, which is a key priority for us,” said Grant.

Outcome

The VMware implementation by Beachhead Group resulted in a 40 percent saving on capital hardware upgrades compared to competitor offerings, achieved by consolidating servers and storage onto a single platform, and all with the assured longevity of at least five years.

With a key priority for schools being manageability, Beachhead Group built a simplified and consolidated environment that could easily be run by non-experts. The school’s IT team were also able to make use of existing VMware skills from managing Horizon to make for a seamless implementation and minimal upskilling required.

Having gone out to market to assess their options, this VMware solution offered the best value for Central Coast Adventist School and delivered the improvements in storage performance and productivity gains that were being sought out by the school and its users. The migration of Horizon onto vSAN enabled school users to access virtual desktops via a web browser and expanded the school’s BYOD capabilities, both of which have become invaluable assets.

“After 18 months of the vSAN solution being in place, we’ve experienced excellent reliability and support and remain well positioned to scale in the event of demands on our system growing any further. The build created by Beachhead continues to benefit the school through its simplicity, ease of use, and the operational efficiency of the hyper-converged environment,” said Grant.

