

Waking up to Greener IT at HM Revenue & Customs

Reduced carbon emissions and energy cost savings for desktop computers

The Situation

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) looks right across its entire organisation for opportunities to save energy and meet strict carbon reduction targets. The IT department has an important role to play, assessing all new equipment for energy efficiency and identifying where operational improvements can help. HMRC worked with Capgemini to deliver the first major IT project to cut CO₂ emissions. The solution balances sustainability targets and HMRC's need to leave PCs on overnight for automated software and security updates when staff and customers are not affected.

The Solution

'Wake on LAN' automatically sets HMRC's PCs to 'low power' when they are not being used, and triggers them to 'wake up' for overnight updates, and after periods when they are idle during lunch breaks or while staff attend meetings. This bespoke solution also introduced

enhanced maintenance and new management information, intelligently adapting existing service management tools instead of deploying new hardware components or new software licences.

The Result

HMRC has reduced overnight PC energy usage by up to 90%, cutting electricity costs by nearly £1 million by the time Wake on LAN was fully deployed. Savings accrued from day one of the pilot to full roll out more than covered project costs and reduced carbon footprint by almost 6,000 carbon tonnes. The decision to enhance desktop management as part of the Wake on LAN solution also helped to improve IT service for HMRC staff without incurring stand alone project costs.

How HMRC and Capgemini Worked Together

With over 80,000 desktops running 24x7x365, HMRC identified its PC estate as a potential 'quick win' to help meet sustainability objectives. The Department worked with prime IT partner Capgemini and their Aspire infrastructure partner Fujitsu to produce a robust business case for Wake on LAN.

Enhanced service management

The project team reviewed off the shelf products to meet the core Wake on LAN specification and quickly identified that license costs for new packaged-based software would be more expensive than an in-house solution and would also add complexity to HMRC's PC estate.

Choosing a bespoke solution also created the opportunity to enhance maintenance and add management information, making Wake on LAN a fully integrated component of the managed desktop service. Features which were added include the ability to easily add remote and automated maintenance jobs without the need for extensive development, and the delivery of a management console for IT support staff to remotely access any PC, anytime.

Reports provide details of energy consumed, energy saved and carbon emissions reduced, as well as an audit trail for data validation, so that HMRC can monitor energy consumption from a single PC to the entire desktop network.

Ensuring successful implementation during roll-out

HMRC's PC estate is made up of different models and ages of equipment from different manufacturers, and the project team knew the rollout of Wake on LAN would highlight problems that could not be attributed easily to specific machines, and which could only be dealt with as they arose. To minimise disruption to users, rollout to 80,000 PCs was managed over a

nine month period, and Wake on LAN was first piloted in the summer holiday period when spare PCs were available for staff to use if engineers needed to fix problems on their computers.

Long-term partnership

Wake on LAN was delivered through HMRC's Aspire IT services contract with Capgemini and is part of a service management transformation which supports improvements for users, simplifies processes, reduces wasteful energy consumption and delivers value for money.

Switching HMRC's PCs to low power mode when they are not being used

has helped the Department meet overall 2009/10 sustainability targets and it will also contribute to the new Government's target of 10% reduction in carbon emissions across its estate during May 2010 to May 2011.

Since Wake on LAN's success, HMRC has created a 'Green IT Model' to monitor and measure the progress of carbon footprint reduction activities across the department and is exploring the opportunity to share this model across government.



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