



Digital Transformation

for Complex Organisations

Lessons from Parramatta City Council



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Introduction

Digital transformation sounds big and daunting. But at its core, it's about making IT **work smarter, faster**, and more **cost-effectively** for your people and your organisation.

Parramatta City Council recently pulled off a major IT overhaul – **and the results were game-changing**.

This guide shares what they achieved (without blowing the budget) – plus **practical tips** for any organisation looking to modernise.



Key Wins

From Parramatta City Council's Transformation

Device build time slashed from 4 hours to 25 minutes

Thanks to modern deployment tools, new devices could be **set up remotely** – no need to be on-site.

Wi-Fi coverage extended citywide

Modern Wi-Fi infrastructure **reached car parks and outdoor spaces**, improving connectivity for staff and services.

Virtual machine footprint reduced by 40%

Migrating from on-prem servers to Microsoft Azure **reduced the number of VMs from 300 to 180**, cutting costs and reducing complexity.

Hybrid workloads solved with Azure Stack HCI

Some systems (like CCTV) needed to stay close to home. Hybrid infrastructure kept them local, while still **managing everything through Azure**.

Microsoft Intune Autopilot Implementation

The Challenge

Like many organisations, Parramatta City Council had relied on **Microsoft SCCM** to manage its fleet of devices. But over time, that setup had become slow, clunky, and hard to manage.

- A single device build could take **up to 4 hours**.
- Staff needed to be **physically connected** to the Council's on-premises network.
- IT had to manage **bloated task sequences and patchwork packaging** from years of updates.

It was time-consuming, and it slowed how quickly staff could get up and running with new machines.

What We Did

Council had already deployed Intune but ran into challenges packaging certain applications and managing dependencies on the on-premises network.

Here's how we helped remove these roadblocks and modernise the process:



1

Added automatic VPN connections

Devices now connect securely to the Council's network on their own, ensuring smooth builds even outside the office.

2

Made builds lightning fast

We replaced manual processes with modern tools, cutting setup time from 4 hours to just 25 minutes.

3

Enabled remote builds

Staff can now set up devices from anywhere with internet access - no need to be on-site.

4

Bundled stubborn apps

We packaged complex or legacy applications to install reliably during the build, avoiding errors and delays.

The Result

- Device build time dropped from **4 hours to just 25 minutes**.
- Remote deployments became possible, **eliminating reliance on on-premises connections**.
- **Seamless user experience**, with devices ready to use straight out of the box.
- Standardised configurations, with **apps and security set up automatically**.
- **IT staff reclaimed valuable time** for proactive support and planning.

Your Takeaway

Still building devices by hand? There's a faster, smarter way.

Here's how you can modernise your device deployment process:

Use Intune and Autopilot for builds

These tools let you pre-configure devices so they automatically set themselves up when staff sign in – no manual imaging required.

Enable remote setups

Make sure new devices can securely connect to your company network over the internet (e.g. using an automatic VPN connection). This means staff can set up laptops from anywhere.

Package tricky apps for smoother installs

Identify apps that often fail during builds and work with your IT partner to bundle them properly so they install without errors.

Standardise settings and security policies

Use Intune to push consistent security rules, apps, and configurations to every device automatically.

Even small improvements here can save your team hours and let staff get working, wherever they are.

Migration to Microsoft Azure

The Challenge

Running more than 300 virtual machines on ageing hardware, Parramatta City Council faced mounting pressures:

- **Hardware nearing end-of-support** posed security risks and growing upgrade costs.
- An upcoming **office move** offered the perfect opportunity to modernise.
- Existing systems **lacked the scalability and flexibility** needed for future growth.

They needed a modern, secure solution – without major disruptions to staff or services.

What We Did

Cloud Context stepped in to guide the Council's migration to Microsoft Azure.

Here's how we made it happen:



1

Assessed the on-prem environment

We started by analysing all 300 virtual machines, mapping workloads, dependencies, and performance needs to understand what was running where.

2

Designed a migration roadmap

We chose the right Azure services and built a phased plan to ensure minimal downtime and smooth cutovers.

3

Executed the migration in stages

Using trusted tools and best practices, we moved workloads securely to Azure while maintaining data integrity and system availability.

4

Tested and optimised the cloud environment

After migration, we thoroughly tested everything and fine-tuned the setup for better performance, lower costs, and easier management.

The Result

- **Successful migration to Microsoft Azure**, delivering a modern, scalable environment.
- **Server footprint reduced from 300 virtual machines to 180**, simplifying management and lowering costs.
- **Performance and flexibility improved**, supporting future growth.
- **Smooth office relocation**, with systems ready and running without disruption.

Your Takeaway

If your organisation is planning a cloud migration – especially during big changes like an office move – here's what matters most:

Start with a clear assessment

Know what you have, what's critical, and what can be consolidated before moving.

Plan your roadmap

A phased approach reduces risk and avoids surprises during migration.

Optimise as you migrate

Don't just lift and shift – look for ways to reduce costs and simplify your environment.

Test thoroughly

Make sure everything works before going live to avoid unexpected disruptions.

Lean on experts

Complex migrations go smoother (and faster) with experienced partners who've done it before.

Cloud migration isn't just about moving servers – it's about setting your organisation up for better performance, lower costs, and future growth.

Implementation of Azure Stack HCI

The Challenge

After moving most of their virtual servers into Azure, Parramatta City Council still had a **small group of systems that couldn't go fully cloud**:

- Some services, like **CCTV and security systems**, needed to stay physically close to other on-prem hardware.
- Traditionally, keeping even a smaller number of workloads on-premises meant maintaining a **full three-tier infrastructure** – racks of servers, storage, and network gear – just for a few devices.
- The Council wanted the best of both worlds: **cloud-like management** while keeping certain workloads on-site.



What We Did

Cloud Context worked alongside Parramatta's IT team and Lenovo to find a modern solution.

Here's how we tackled it:

1

Explored Azure Stack HCI

We evaluated how Azure Stack HCI could handle the Council's local workloads while connecting seamlessly to their cloud environment.

2

Built the right solution with Lenovo

All three teams collaborated on a hardware design and bill of materials that fit the Council's technical needs and budget.

3

Deployed Azure Stack HCI

Cloud Context provisioned the new infrastructure and integrated it with Azure so it could be managed alongside the Council's cloud systems.

The Result

- **Azure Stack HCI deployed on-premises**, giving the Council a hybrid solution managed through a **single pane of glass** in Azure.
- **Close-proximity workloads** like CCTV now run locally without needing a bulky, traditional server stack.
- **Lower costs and less maintenance**, thanks to a smaller on-prem footprint and cloud-style managing tools.
- **Future-ready infrastructure**, allowing the Council to continue modernising without being tied to legacy hardware.

Your Takeaway

If your organisation has workloads that **can't fully move to the cloud**, there's no need to stick with outdated, high-maintenance hardware.



Consider hybrid solutions like Azure Stack HCI

Manage on-prem systems just like cloud resources – all from one place.



Work with trusted partners

Collaboration between your IT team and vendors can help design solutions that fit your needs and budget.



Think beyond "all or nothing"

Even partial migrations can reduce costs, simplify operations, and keep sensitive systems close to home.

Modern IT isn't about being purely cloud or purely on-premises – it's about finding the right mix for your organisation.

Tip: Use Azure Arc with Azure Stack HCI.

It lets you manage on-prem resources right alongside your cloud workloads in one view.

Update of Wi-Fi Infrastructure

The Challenge

Like many organisations, Parramatta City Council was dealing with **ageing Wi-Fi infrastructure** that couldn't keep up with modern demands.

- Frequent **dropouts and poor performance** disrupted staff and services.
- Troubleshooting was difficult with **limited visibility** into network issues.
- The infrastructure was **approaching end-of-support**, raising security and cost concerns.
- New digital services required **expanding Wi-Fi coverage** into outdoor areas like car parks and public spaces.

It was frustrating for users and held back the Council's plans for broader digital transformation.

What We Did

Cloud Context partnered with Parramatta City Council and Juniper to bring their Wi-Fi network into the modern age.

Here's how we tackled it:



1

Chose Juniper Mist AI technology

Juniper's Mist AI platform offered advanced analytics, easier troubleshooting, and strong coverage – perfect for the Council's expanding needs.

2

Refreshed all office Wi-Fi infrastructure

We replaced ageing equipment to boost speed, stability, and user experience.

3

Expanded coverage into outdoor spaces

New deployments extended Wi-Fi into car parks and other outdoor areas.

4

Collaborated on the right solution

Cloud Context, Juniper, and the Council worked together to design a solution that fit both technical needs and budget constraints.

The Result

- **Modern, reliable Wi-Fi**, with stronger coverage and fewer dropouts.
- **Single-pane-of-glass management**, allowing IT teams and Cloud Context to monitor and troubleshoot the entire network centrally.
- **Improved user experience**, supporting new digital services and everyday connectivity.
- **Scalable infrastructure** ready for future expansion across the CBD.

Your Takeaway

If your Wi-Fi network is struggling to keep up, it might be time for an upgrade.

Here's what to consider:



Look for AI-driven solutions

Tools like Mist AI give you real-time visibility, automate troubleshooting, and help identify the root cause of network issues faster.



Plan for outdoor coverage

Modern services often need reliable Wi-Fi beyond office walls, whether for IoT devices, security cameras, or public connectivity across large areas.



Balance budget with long-term gains

Investing in newer tech can reduce future maintenance costs, simplify management, and improve user experience – saving money and time in the long run.



Partner with trusted experts

Working with the right team ensures proper network design, optimised RF planning, and smoother deployment, especially for complex environments like councils or large campuses.

Reliable Wi-Fi isn't just a convenience anymore – it's a critical piece of your digital transformation puzzle.

Quick Transformation Checklist

Digital transformation can feel overwhelming – but it doesn't have to be. Use this quick checklist to help you focus your efforts, find early wins, and avoid common pitfalls as you modernise your IT environment.



Audit your current workloads

Understand what systems you have and what can move to the cloud or be optimised.



Identify quick wins, like device deployment

Small improvements can save hours and boost productivity fast.



Evaluate hybrid needs

Not everything has to live in the cloud; hybrid solutions can offer the best of both worlds.



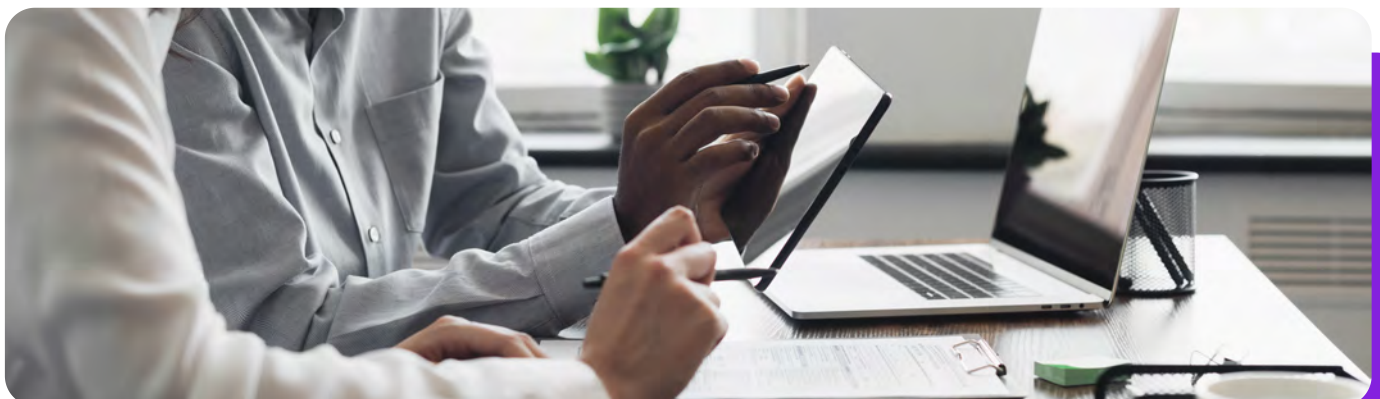
Don't neglect Wi-Fi and connectivity

Reliable, modern networks keep your people and services connected.



Work with experienced partners

Having experts by your side helps avoid pitfalls and accelerates progress.



Final Word

Parramatta City Council's story proves **you don't need an unlimited budget or a huge IT team** to modernise your technology.

Small changes, like faster device builds, save valuable time. Bigger steps, like cloud migration, **can reshape how your entire organisation works and grows.**

Digital transformation isn't about doing everything at once – **it's about making the right moves at the right time.**

If you're planning your own transformation and need a partner to help, **we'd love to chat.**

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