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Elevating Public Sector Services with Smarter Collaboration

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Great communication and shared goals are keys to establishing a thriving culture of collaboration. When West Midlands Police engaged the VMware EUC Customer Success team to support its mobility and device management transformation, it gained a trusted partner and knowledge too good to keep to itself.

Collaboration can be a double-edged sword in the public sector. Does it mean coming together for the greater good, or is it code for stretching resources? At West Midlands Police, England's second-largest police force, collaboration means harnessing people power to increase public safety and drive real impact for officers on the beat.

A police officer's top priority is being out in the community, helping people and preventing crime. To do that effectively, the force needs to equip them with the best possible tools for the job and make sure staff get the support they need—be that technical or emotional.

"There's a fine line between making sure officers can work remotely and allowing them downtime at the station to share knowledge and recharge," explains Gregg Hudson, mobility and automation manager at West Midlands Police IT and digital team. "A lot of careful planning went into our mobility strategy, and VMware EUC Customer Success worked seamlessly alongside our team to help us get it right."

The rise of the connected officer

New technologies are helping to shape the future of law enforcement, particularly when it comes to wearable technology and drones, which can scout locations safely and record valuable video footage. Today's connected officer may be equipped with body cameras, augmented reality eyewear and, of course, a mobile device.

But for technology to be effective, it needs to be easy to use, valuable and secure. And this is where things can get complicated. How do you empower support staff to fix devices remotely without compromising data security? If you loan officers to another force during an event like the Commonwealth Games, what happens if their devices stop working? Not to mention issues around user adoption, lost devices and app performance.

With these concerns in mind, West Midlands Police wasn't just looking for the right technology. It needed a partner with the technical expertise and a thorough understanding of its unique challenges. And that's where the partnership with VMware EUC Customer Success began.

Designing a unique solution

In just nine months, West Midlands Police and VMware migrated from an on-premises unified endpoint management solution to cloud, onboarding an initial 5,000 users, which has since doubled based on the success of the implementation.

"VMware EUC Customer Success is an excellent program. We have a great relationship with the team. It's a joy working together, and we invite them on all our team away days," says Hudson. "From design to implementation, we had the technical assistance and advice we needed at every stage."

The collaboration helped the West Midlands Police IT and digital team overcome roadblocks and get new features ready for release quickly. Despite complex challenges, VMware architects were available around the clock to keep building momentum to drive the project forward.

“Some of the VMware EUC Customer Success team worked so closely with us we came to think of them as part of our own team. By combining that unique level of insight into our organization with an extraordinary knowledge of VMware technology, we have an environment that works for us, and our workspace is worlds away from the traditional corporate setup,” explains Hudson.

Today, the force can set up devices in just 15 minutes and equip staff with role-specific devices with all the apps they need to do their jobs. Apps such as Google Maps get priority network access to ensure high performance, and the tiered support desk can provide remote support and training to minimize downtime.

Spreading the joy

It's often said that happiness is contagious, and West Midlands Police certainly isn't keeping its success to itself. No fewer than 11 national police forces and the French Directorate of Information Systems and Communication (DSIC) have paid a visit to check out its mobility and device management strategy in action.

The force is also engaging with other public sector bodies and VMware customers to share best practices, so everyone benefits from better systems that make life easier for staff and citizens.

“Our relationship with VMware EUC Customer Success is far from over. We're working together on new projects to finetune operations, strengthen reporting and set up self-service portals for staff to report lost devices quickly,” Hudson says. “My advice to anyone with a project in the pipeline is to think about the partnership you're getting from your vendors. Technology is flexible by design. With the right people on your team, you can tailor solutions that perfectly fit your ambitions now, and in the future.”



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