Kingston® TECHNOLOGY

Maximum benefit from a minimal budget.

Without the funding to replace hundreds of ageing PCs, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust had to find an affordable way to increase speed and performance, and to transfer smoothly to Windows 10. An upgrade kit from Kingston provided the answer.

The Trust has various sites up and down the Fylde and Wyre Coast, from Freckleton to Lancaster, including the main one, Blackpool Victoria Hospital. Its IT department supports around 7,000 staff at the Trust, as well as looking after two other Clinical Commissioning Groups and three related organisations. This considerable workload is spread across numerous functions, including Service Desk, IT Support, Network and Comms, Back Office, Web Service, Purchasing and Stores.

NHS
Blackpool Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

An urgent need to replace PCs

Each year, the IT department applies for central funding to replace outdated, out-of-spec PCs. In previous years, the funding has come through, paying for brand new machines – but last year, the money wasn't made available. This coincided with the need to upgrade everything to Windows 10, as Windows 7 was soon to lose its support from Microsoft.

Conaill MacCormac, IT Developments Officer for the Trust, explains the challenge in more detail: "Our oldest Dell PCs and laptops were very slow. If we'd secured the funding, we would have replaced them last year – but new ones cost between £400 and £600 each, and we have around 800 of them, so we had to carry on using them."

Looking for a low-cost alternative

Conaill and his colleagues needed to find a way to transfer to Windows 10 while spending as little as possible. And this affected not just the Dell PCs and laptops, but most of the PCs belonging to the Trust and its related organisations – around 8,000 in total. With full replacement of the machines out of the question, the only solution was to upgrade the components that were slowing things down. The IT department tested Kingston's SSD upgrade kit, along with extra RAM for each model of computer. This combination worked: the PCs' speed increased, and they had enough memory and storage to hold and run the Trust's secure Windows 10 image. All for around £60-£80 for each computer.

More speed, more capability, more efficiency

The IT department is now using Kingston's SSDs to increase the speed and performance of most of the Trust's computers – and this is making everyone's work more efficient, in both admin and clinical roles. Plus, 93% of the machines are now on Windows 10. According to NHS Digital, this is the highest uptake of Windows 10 among the country's trusts, relative to the total number of computers. Most importantly, this means the PCs are now less at risk from viruses, malware and other data breaches.

For Conaill, the most noticeable difference is how quickly the older machines now turn on: "Instead of taking five minutes to get to the log-on screen, users can now be working within 60 seconds. Staff are so much happier, working more efficiently with the faster systems. And with fewer complaints of slow computer speeds, the Service Desk can focus on other aspects of the Trust's IT."

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IT Developments Officer

Blackpool Teaching Hospitals
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Why Kingston?

Of course, Kingston's upgrade kit wasn't the only option open to the IT department, but they had tried other suppliers' SSDs in the past, and been unhappy with the results. So they chose Kingston at this time because of its reputation for quality and reliability, and its ability to supply the upgrades at a reasonable cost.

The speed of the Kingston SSD was another factor, along with its very practical design features. "I really like the functionality of the metal bracket," says Conaill. "Its slim profile makes 'hot-swapping' the HDD for an SSD very quick and easy."

What's next for the Trust?

There's still plenty of work to do. Conaill and his team need to finish transferring the last 7% of the Trust's computers to Windows 10, and the related organisations have a fair way to go to finish upgrading all their PCs. Naturally, everyone hopes the next application for funding will be more successful – but in the meantime, Conaill's requirement from Kingston is very simple: "More SSDs please."