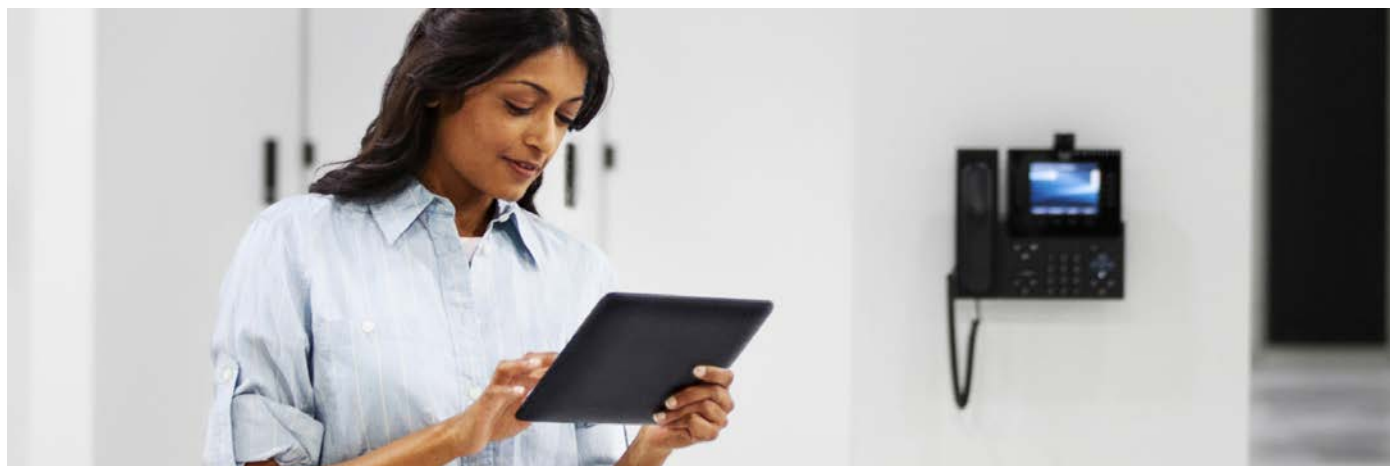


Strategy Service Yields Mobile Roadmap for Electronics Retailer

Customer Case Study



Best Buy enlists Cisco Services to validate mobile network, taking its “work anywhere” initiative to next level.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Best Buy
Industry: Retail (Consumer Electronics)
Location: Richfield, Minnesota
Number of Employees: 165,000

Challenge:

- Validate current BYOD (bring-your-own-device) environment and drive efforts to expand it
- Strengthen security of mobile network
- Create IT strategy for expanding Best Buy’s mobility initiatives

Solution:

- Engage Cisco Architecture Strategy Services
- Work with Cisco Services to develop BYOD roadmap
- Develop role-based access controls to improve network security and maintain compliance

Results:

- Used independent audit to demonstrate strength, value of BYOD environment
- Road-mapped environment that can scale to accommodate Best Buy’s growth
- Gained competitive edge with flexible workplace that encourages employee productivity

Challenge

Based in Richfield, Minnesota, consumer electronics giant Best Buy began its life in West Saint Paul, in 1966, as an audio specialty store called Sound of Music. Over the years, the store’s product mix shifted and its name changed, but its promise to customers remained constant: to provide outstanding choice, knowledgeable advice, and unmatched support for their technology needs.

Today, Best Buy is the world’s largest multi-channel consumer electronics retailer, and its company culture is tech-savvy to the core. From the boardroom to the sales floor, employees consistently demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for the latest technologies and gadgets.

That passion for innovation is one of the company’s core strengths, but it can also create unexpected challenges. For example, manufacturers of mobile devices commonly deliver demo versions of their products to Best Buy’s upper management. Some executives had begun to use the demo devices in an unofficial capacity within Best Buy to enhance workplace productivity. “With an increasing number of mobile devices in circulation, smartphones and iPads were starting to pop up in our environment, either on the internal network or synching with email,” says Thomas Bauer, senior manager of remote access services at Best Buy. “Unauthorized mobile devices were becoming a significant security threat, yet we couldn’t ignore requests to use these new devices for doing Best Buy work. We didn’t want to be perceived as getting in the way of productivity.”

Realizing that the executives represented just the beginning of a trend, and that soon, more employees would be attempting to connect their own devices, Best Buy’s IT team decided to get ahead of the curve by launching a BYOD (bring-your-own-device) initiative. That was January 2012. Nine months later, and after much promotion internally, Best Buy deployed a proof-of-concept pilot of its new BYOD environment.



“Thanks to the workshop discussions, the post-workshop recommendations, and the high-level architectural view of our network that Cisco Services provided, we’re now talking about how this technology can help us scale our BYOD environment to accommodate a greater mix of employees, contractors, and even partners.”

Michael McDonald
Senior Director, Network and
Infrastructure Services
Best Buy

Solution

Having forged ahead with a BYOD initiative at a time when much of the competition was still figuring out a mobile strategy, Best Buy senior director of network and infrastructure services, Michael McDonald, was justifiably proud of the company’s just-launched environment. However, he also realized that it represented one of several BYOD phases in Best Buy’s overall journey to greater mobility. Thus, he was eager to take advantage of the opportunity when Cisco proposed the Unified Workspace Architecture Strategy Service to provide a high-level architectural assessment of their new environment.

Says McDonald, “We launched our BYOD pilot with 1400 users in an environment designed to handle 5000. But the pent-up demand for mobility and the buzz around the BYOD initiative were so great we knew that environment would reach capacity fast. When Cisco proposed the strategy workshop, I realized it would provide the fuel we needed to convince our executives that BYOD was an initiative worth continuing. With an independent audit from Cisco and a jointly developed roadmap for the future, I knew it would be easy to demonstrate the program’s business value.”

With that in mind, Bauer began gathering the information Cisco® Services would need to evaluate Best Buy’s BYOD environment. “We wanted the workshop to be as productive as possible, so I presented the Cisco team with all of the documentation I could get my hands on: architectural diagrams, solutions blueprints, and more,” he says. “By the time the workshop took place, they were intimately familiar with our BYOD environment, and they brought all the right resources to the table.”

Those resources included a team of enterprise and solution architects who reviewed the reference materials and interviewed Best Buy employees before conducting an architectural and technical workshop that covered everything from security in the new environment to compliance policies, wireless, mobile device management, application management, and more. At the end of the workshop, Best Buy had received a number of use cases and a jointly developed roadmap for taking its BYOD environment into the future.

In the wake of the workshop, Cisco Services presented Best Buy with a list of recommendations, showing how it could enhance security and maintain compliance obligations, scale the environment, and support the BYOD tools required to maintain it.

Results

For Bauer, the workshop and continuing engagement with Cisco Services brought tremendous value to Best Buy. “For the services I’m responsible for, the payback from this workshop has been tenfold,” he says. “We asked the Cisco Services team everything from ‘Are we doing certificates the best way?’ to ‘How can we achieve a better customer experience?’ to ‘How can we support more devices?’ There was no issue they did not fully explore. I’ve never had a better experience partnering with a vendor to validate a solution.”

For McDonald, the workshop validated not just the new environment’s security and performance, but also his own notion that the BYOD initiative could be used to gain a competitive advantage. “Thanks to the workshop discussions, the post-workshop recommendations, and the high-level architectural view of our network that Cisco Services provided, we’re now talking about how this technology can help us scale our BYOD environment to accommodate a greater mix of employees, contractors, and even partners,” he says.

Bauer believes that this competitive edge will stem not just from making Best Buy's current employees more productive but also from helping it recruit better-quality candidates through the lure of a flexible workplace. "If our BYOD initiative is a success, candidates will know that we empower our people to work where, when, and on whatever device they're most comfortable. Whether our people want to snack (via phone), dine (via tablet), or feast (via desktop) on Best Buy resources, Cisco Services has helped us establish a work-anywhere environment that will accommodate them."

Perhaps even more importantly, Best Buy can now use its BYOD environment to demonstrate the value of the devices it sells, showing how its own employees are using their personal smart phones and tablets to connect to company resources and better serve customers.

Next Steps

With its BYOD journey already well under way, Best Buy is now firmly focused on taking its mobility efforts to the next level. To that end, Cisco Services is already helping the retailer develop role-based access controls to increase security in the BYOD architecture. As for Bauer, he was so impressed by the quantity and quality of knowledge that Cisco Services brought to the table, he anticipates continuing to rely on Cisco going forward. "Navigating this shift in how and where employees work is a huge undertaking. I'm glad we have a partner in Cisco that can provide the expertise and perspective required to keep us on track in our efforts to provide the flexible workplace that our business demands and our employees desire."

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Unified Workspace Architecture Strategy Services, go to www.cisco.com/go/byod

Services List

- Cisco Unified Workspace Architecture Strategy Service



Americas Headquarters
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San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.
Singapore

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,
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