



Canterbury Christ Church University Modernizes Application Management with Recast Software

UK University breaks through the limitations of its legacy applications platform with cloud migration and remote learning to meet modern higher education needs.



Customer: Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) is a public university based in Canterbury, Kent, England, and has grown rapidly with several locations and over 30,000 students.

Challenge: Their application delivery and management held them back from migrating to the cloud, plus many limitations made critical updates and patches time-consuming and complex.

Solution: Application Workspace (formerly Liquit Workspace) and its Release & Patch Management add on was deployed with support from ST-FOUR IT Managed Services and Support. This allowed CCCU to migrate to the cloud for seamless and simple application delivery, updates, and patches along with many other advantages.

Results: CCCU achieved the expected measurable outcomes for total cost of ownership (TCO) savings, greater flexibility, and reduced service desk tickets, resulting in happier end users and IT.

Canterbury Christ Church University

A core tenet of Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) is the “passionate belief that education changes lives.” As remote learning took on accelerated importance, this leading UK university needed a better way to deliver and manage applications to educate future generations of leaders.

Universities around the world depend on technology to live, work, and play. This requires higher education administrators to provide the best experience and tools to attract the best students. University and campus operations also need to run as efficiently as possible, including the delivery, management, updating and patching of the essential student and staff applications. Adding to the challenges and complexity has been the rapid acceleration of remote learning due to the pandemic.

At CCCU, IT administrators understood the need to modernize their application delivery and management capabilities. This would enable them to continue offering students, teachers, and support staff a technology environment that made remote teaching and learning easy and seamless via the cloud. The challenge was that their

current on-premises application platform held them back from transitioning to the cloud.

The search for a modern, flexible solution

The legacy CCCU technology stack lacked the flexibility to support student devices and anywhere access to needed applications. The university would need to integrate modern technologies like Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) and cloud applications in a single-pane-of-glass portal. In early 2020, CCCU began looking for a solution to modernize workspace and application delivery and deployment to their end-users.

The goal was to bring a more modern and flexible workspace to students and employees. IT administrators were looking for the ultimate hybrid environment — a mix of a uniform desktop delivery to end-users with on-premises solutions like SCCM, Intune, Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) and native applications.

CCCU looked at several application management solutions in their search, including one that specialized in the higher education sector. These solutions lacked the anywhere operational capabilities or affordability the university needed to deliver the required results.

Application Workspace for the higher education win

With the help of UK-based ST-FOUR IT Managed Services and Support, CCCU determined that Recast Software (formerly Liquit) Application Workspace offered the capabilities they needed. As a longstanding Recast partner, ST-FOUR understood their innovative technology, broad flexibility, and cost-effective pricing structure would be the perfect fit for the needs of CCCU.

The firm worked in partnership with CCCU IT and Recast Software's Netherlands-based team to implement a pilot phase that would give them confidence in the solution and speed deployment. CCCU Assistant Director for IT, Digital Engagement, and Innovation Andy Powell explained the reasoning behind the pilot:

"We needed to make sure Application Workspace was best of breed. What we found was that it ticked off all the boxes we required and more."

In addition to invaluable support during the pilot phase, the platform also provided a host of benefits that would continue to meet ongoing needs for the university, including:

- Easy path for migration to the cloud via Application Workspace connectors
- Fast, trouble-free deployment including automatic updates to endpoints to save the IT team time and effort
- Cost-effective, all-in-one solution with everything in a single license model
- Dramatic lowering of TCO compared to other solutions with increased flexibility and options

CCCU IT department gets "Unsung Hero" award

In November 2020, Application Workspace was implemented as a browser-based CCCU App Store that also connects to App-V and AVD. This would enable students to access over 100 of the most popular applications for direct download onto their own devices for free. The one-stop shop aspect for selecting their own applications from the portal meant true self-service for the students without the need for any additional interactions.

The Application Workspace platform's Smart Icons would automatically deliver and deploy them to the end-users based on device or AVD needs defined by IT on the back end. Recast Software helped us achieve our goal of anywhere, anytime, any device application access that gave the university a one-stop, seamless, and easy experience for students," said Andy.

With the Application Workspace platform in place, CCCU saved money while adding flexibility and agility to application delivery. This provides critical advantages to higher education institutions across the globe struggling to keep up with changing needs in a remote hybrid world.

The entire CCCU IT department worked tirelessly to successfully deploy this solution. CCCU Assistant Director for IT, Digital Engagement, and Innovation Gareth Stears was instrumental in the entire process. This included everything from meeting demanding deadlines to ensure a smooth rollout and adoption of the solution to working weekends to add applications.

The IT team's ability to configure all the student applications instantly made the process fast and easy. Application Workspace connectors simplified the migration path to the cloud, so the environment was up and running within just two days.

The entire CCCU IT department was awarded the "Unsung Hero" award by the Students Union for their work on the easy application access and the app store. Students were enthusiastic about the change, calling the App Store an absolute game changer for easy access to software and applications in one place. They collectively made it clear that the new app environment helped them improve studying and homework completion.

Application deployment for new releases were also significantly reduced. The platform saved CCCU 90 percent of the configuration, deployment, management, and updating time while cutting TCO in half compared to other solutions. Andy explained how Application Workspace enhanced the IT team's ability to support users and increase ROI while lowering TCO:

"Application Workspace allows us to strip out the number of fixed desktops and eliminate concerns about laptop hard drive sizes, which helps reduce overall hardware expenses. The platform helps us address these issues, lower TCO, and move our infrastructure forward with flexibility and agility while delivering the best possible experience for students and faculty."



"It was outstanding to be recognized by the students for the good work. We're a small organization, and Recast Software helped us hit it out of the park"

Andy Powell, CCCU Assistant Director for IT, Digital Engagement, and Innovation





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