

Lowes future-proof their business with Nexon

Lowes extends their partnership with Nexon to future-proof how they securely connect and collaborate with staff and customers.



The Australian retail sector is facing a period of unprecedented change. Digital disruption has redefined the shopping experience. The expectation of a consistent omnichannel presence and better customer experience has shifted a significant reliance onto technology to accelerate innovation and transformation.



Lowes Australia have been a household name in the Australian retail clothing space for over 120 years. With over 200 stores nationwide and being 100% Australian owned, Lowes' lines of menswear and school uniforms have long been the staples of many Australian family wardrobes. The brand has always been at the forefront of the retail industry, adapting to the changing needs of Australians and implementing ethical sourcing and manufacturing standards. Like many in the retail sector, they currently face the challenge of dealing with digital disruption.

Mitigating risk of aging technology

Lowes is at the forefront of innovation in Australia's retail industry. One of their strategic focuses in recent years has been to drive a change in perception of the Lowes brand and modernise the organisation in the process. In order to bring in new Lowes customers while still servicing and maintaining their existing customers, Lowes identified the need to digitally transform.

The first step in that transformation was the decision to overhaul their IT hardware infrastructure and upgrade the network - across 200+ store locations including head office. This decision was identified after a security audit took place and the need to

mitigate potential security vulnerabilities was identified. It triggered Lowes' leadership team and chief advisors Sarann Ryan and Lucy Gibson, to assess their aging infrastructure across their locations and agree on a replacement of all core devices and switches. Part of this project has involved the migration from ADSL to nbn™ services across stores.

Secure, standardised infrastructure

After sourcing quotes for the hardware replacement, Lowes chose to extend their existing relationship with Nexon Asia Pacific (Nexon). Lowes signed a 5 year contract with Nexon in July 2018 for head office and store network, cloud telephony, centralised security, cloud infrastructure and IT device replacement across stores. This new contract will now see Nexon managing Lowes' complete IT environment with 24/7 managed support.

"Nexon was a natural fit due to the longevity of our relationship with them," explained Geoff Paine, Lowes' IT Manager. "Their proposal was competitive, and we knew by our current experience with them that they could deliver. We also knew they had deep experience in the retail sector so they could bring their expertise and skills to the table."

At a glance

Industry

Retail

Business challenge

- Aging hardware and security exposure
- nbn™ transition for over 200 stores
- Limited in-house IT resources

Solution

- Network and infrastructure overhaul across 200+ stores and Head Office
- Fully managed and customised roll-out based on Lowes' timeline
- New Cisco Edge devices, Meraki wireless access points and switches at stores
- New Meraki switches at Head Office.
- 24x7 support

Outcome

- Secure, scalable network
- Minimal to no disruption for retail locations throughout transition
- Ongoing simplified network and infrastructure management
- Standardised technology across Lowes' stores

Nexon have partnered with Lowes for the last 15 years, maturing and growing the relationship over that time. The first phase in their partnership began with Nexon maintaining Lowes' store network, providing internet at their head office and stores. The partnership has strengthened over the years, to include additional services such as upgrading their aging PABX with VoIP. Lowes continued to modernise and future-proof their business, migrating their on-premise infrastructure to Nexon's private cloud just over three years ago.

With an aggressive rollout schedule set to finish in May 2019, Nexon have begun the process of transitioning Lowes' store devices and head office switching environment to Cisco Meraki. The store roll out will see the installation of new wireless access points, edge routers and switches. Additionally, Nexon has increased capacity of the Head Office network and will replace core switches as part of this project

Reliable, Secure system

"The roll out of the network with new switches and Edge devices will reduce the risk of vulnerabilities from our aged hardware," said Mr Paine. "Our old environment was a mix of second-hand routers and aged switches and access points. This will standardise our equipment and make it easier for our IT staff to support."

The new equipment will provide Lowes with a standardised device footprint and offer a more reliable and secure architecture. This will allow for a reduction in troubleshooting for the organisation's in-house IT team.

Nexon worked closely with Lowes to plan for minimum disruption of the core business during the transition. To this point, the roll out has been seamless with no adverse impact to the stores, all reporting business as usual.

Moving into the future

Following the roll out of new devices, Lowes' next steps will be to consolidate servers and standardise their operating systems to further strengthen their security. They will continue to move their business to the cloud using Nexon's platforms where possible.

Nexon's deep retail experience have made them the undeniable choice for one of Australia's best loved brands. From transitioning the core network, securing every touchpoint and connecting the workforce, Nexon have supported Lowes to future-proof their business.

About Nexon

Nexon Asia Pacific (Nexon) is an award-winning digital consulting and managed services partner for mid-market, and government organisations across Australia. We have a uniquely broad suite of solutions to service clients who require end-to-end capabilities coupled with specialist expertise in security, cloud and digital solutions.

Our end-to-end solutions help clients to solve problems, address frictions and accelerate growth. Committed to the highest standards of responsiveness, competency

“ Nexon are accommodating to our needs and planned a roll out to meet our requirements with limited internal IT resources on the project.

Geoff Paine
IT Manager, Lowes

and transparency, Nexon is built on a unique client care model that is fuelled by continuous feedback. With over 400 staff, we employ some of the country's most experienced consultants and empowers teams to make decisions that accelerate change for client organisations.

As a certified and accredited local and state government provider, CREST and ISO-certified, Nexon partners with world-class technology vendors to deliver innovative solutions and service excellence.

We help our clients move from a position of overwhelm to empowerment, looking forward to a more agile and digital future.

To find out about Nexon, Call us at **1300 800 000**, email us at enquiry@nexon.com.au, or visit nexon.com.au