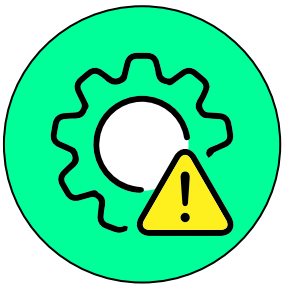
# Immunising Latrobe City Council's network against future risks

LATROBE CITY COUNCIL

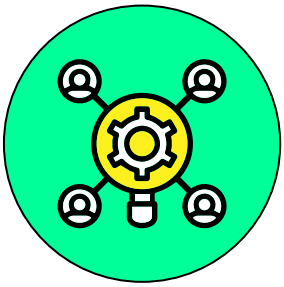
# SIDEBAR: AT A GLANCE

**Summary:**
A timely network audit has helped Latrobe City Council diagnose potential risk factors for its digital health; and take immediate steps to correct them with Affinity Blue's help.



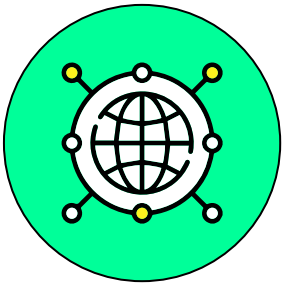
### The situation:

Ageing network infrastructure posed growing risks to security, uptime, and agility



### The solution:

Rigorous network audit including both technical and qualitative investigations



### The results:

Refreshed network design that addresses several previously-unknown vulnerabilities and maximises long-term performance

# THE SITUATION

Staff at Latrobe City Council spend most of their time on citizen services and working with industry to maintain the city's vitality. Latrobe's wired network, however, needed a revitalisation of its own. The council's IT staff suspected that their network infrastructure was not only underutilised but also vulnerable to outages and security breaches. However, they were struggling to verify those suspicions – not least because much of the network's documentation had fallen out of date.

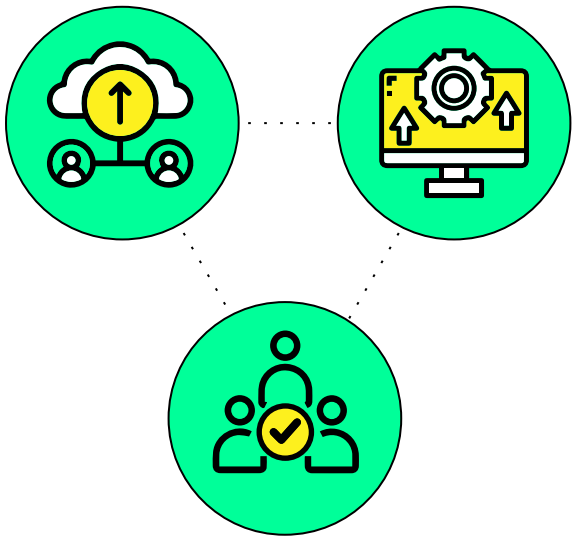
**"Latrobe City Council's network has been running for many years without significant update," explained Kenneth Lee, Network Engineer at Affinity Blue. "While they had old network documentation on hand, much of it had fallen out of date due to ad hoc additions and changes over the years."**

Latrobe City Council enlisted Affinity Blue's help for a comprehensive audit of its network. Doing so would ideally pinpoint where Latrobe's network had fallen behind contemporary network standards, as well as helping prioritise areas for most urgent remediation.



# THE SOLUTION

Affinity Blue's engineers started by mapping out Latrobe's current network infrastructure and configurations. Instead of blindly trusting existing network maps, the Affinity Blue team systematically gathered information directly from Latrobe's network devices, building an independent picture of the network which was then cross-checked against previous documentation. "We essentially rebuilt the network map from scratch," Lee says of the process.



**The audit covered not just Latrobe's core network, but also other points of infrastructure including the council's primary and backup datacentres. "Affinity Blue knew exactly what questions to ask and what information to capture during our interviews with them. Their workshops and overall engagement process showed a real interest in gaining a holistic understanding of both our technical and operational environment,"** said Adam Broadbent, IT Network Administrator for Latrobe City Council.

"You don't want to advise your customer in a certain direction only to discover later that you've inadvertently caused more pain than gain by inadvertently stepping on another part of their IT," said Simon Hayward, Managing Director at Affinity Blue.



> To us, going above and beyond in these audits is just common sense: ultimately you're not just presenting technical information, you're taking a forensic approach to solving key business problems.
>
> Simon Hayward,
> Managing Director

# THE RESULTS

The audit shone light on several key issues in Latrobe's network, including several that the council's IT team had been entirely unaware of. "We found various areas with a single point of failure at both the hardware and application level, any of which could have caused widespread outages even just minor faults occurred," said Lee. "While the IT team was aware of some of these issues, others came as a surprise to them as the network had evolved beyond their knowledge.

"Having a clear overall picture of the network means that instead of trying to fix each point separately, we can work with Latrobe's IT team to develop a fully redundant network infrastructure as a whole."

Doing so will see Latrobe and Affinity Blue redesign the entire network's approach to routing, making use of geographical redundancy across both network and datacentre components to better protect Latrobe City Council from unexpected downtime. Latrobe's heavy use of static routing will be replaced with a single routing protocol – allowing the council to more easily expand and optimise network performance to meet growing demand.

**"We've had 100% confidence in the audit's results and Affinity Blue's solutions design," said Broadbent of Latrobe City Council. "Their knowledge and skillsets have proven impressive all throughout this process."**

While the audit's recommendations highlighted the need for a holistic approach to network redesign, Affinity Blue also proposed a range of "quick fix" alternatives for more immediate risk mitigation, including more rigorous traffic monitoring and connection adjustments for additional redundancy.

"Network audits are always more than just a technical exercise – when done strategically, they establish a yardstick that can inform all aspects of an organisation's IT strategy from risk to scaling," said Hayward. "In both our approach to auditing and the recommendations we provide, we're constantly thinking about what will best serve the organisation's current and future interests without putting unrealistic pressure on its people. It's all about developing a realistic roadmap towards the future, and that starts with clarity about where the organisation is right now."

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