

# Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation

Complete technology and services revamp provides Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation with the reliability and speed it needs from ICT



## Calibre One delivering the sustainable and engaging ICT environment Ironbark needs to improve lives and transform Aboriginal communities

Based in Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory (NT), Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation (Ironbark) is a not-for-profit organisation delivering services to urban, regional and remote Aboriginal communities in the Darwin/Daly Region. Ironbark aims to improve lives and transform Aboriginal communities by providing

employment services, enterprise, economic and community development, and business solutions.

The Darwin/Daly Region is an area of 60,000km<sup>2</sup> with three main population centres and a number of small, remote and isolated communities. Ironbark operates from nine locations six of which are remote communities.

It is critical to the organisation's goals to strive for sustained outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Ironbark holds the core belief that local people must be engaged in the process – not only as recipients of services and/or initiatives – but as principal participants at all levels.

### Challenge:

To completely revamp the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and associated support services for a not-for-profit organisation servicing Aboriginal communities in northern Australia.

### Solution:

Re-engineer and provision: a new wide and local area networking infrastructure; Internet connectivity; whole-of-ICT managed services; and a 24x7 helpdesk. Introduce a new public cloud infrastructure providing Remote Desktop Services, and migrate email and other services to Office 365. Introduce a ShoreTel (now Mitel) unified communications (UC) system to address communications deficiencies.

### Benefits:

- Greater staff productivity through increased networking speeds and application response times
- Improving internal communications with single IP telephony solution and feature-rich UC
- Better user experience with more flexible desktop configurations and application accessibility
- Responsive, available user support services reducing downtime and user frustrations
- Overall reduction in annual IT spend across all services

By 2016, ICT had become a significant problem for Ironbark and its 65 staff.

“Unlike a lot of organisations that would fit our profile, we have high ICT needs, with a reliance on internet-based applications, a number of remote offices and a lot of mobile data usage,” explained Chris Shirley, Ironbark’s Corporate Services Manager.

Ironbark had the multiple challenges of different phone systems in each of its locations; a requirement for Internet and cloud-based applications; and Internet connections which, at their best, were only marginally better than home broadband performance.



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Chris Shirley  
Corporate Services Manager  
Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation

“Productivity was a big issue. If someone called looking for one of our staff members there was no way to easily transfer calls. We had to just give them another number to call. With our online applications, making just one change to a line on a spreadsheet would take minutes while we waited for the application to respond,” said Mr Shirley.

In 2016 when the main IT support contract came up for renewal, Ironbark invited three NT-based service providers to tender for a solution to address its ICT issues and supply a three-year managed services contract.

“Two of the service providers responding to the tender offered similar IT solutions, but Calibre One’s unlimited 24x7 helpdesk was critical for us as our users can be demanding and aren’t always technically minded, so we have high support needs. Calibre One also proposed a single unified communications solution across all our sites to ensure a consistent telephony experience for all our users. With Calibre One we now have a single contact for IT, communications, networks and mobile data,” said Mr Shirley.

### **Simplicity and Innovation**

Calibre One values simplicity and innovation at all levels – from the commercial model, the technical design and ultimately the user experience.

As a Telstra Gold, and a Telstra Business and Enterprise Partner, Calibre One was able to bundle the complete service into one monthly bill and provide access to Telstra’s technology fund. This gave Ironbark the capital required for procurement of hardware and implementation services, and simplified ongoing billing.

To simplify the user experience Calibre One designed a solution where performance-critical programs run locally and key applications run centrally as “published apps”. This greatly improved performance, and also created a much simpler user experience for staff.

### **Creating Connections**

Engaging with its communities is held as a core principle at Ironbark. However, prior to the revamp, Ironbark had been struggling with internal communications, engagement and

## Calibre One **Case Study**

collaboration. This was having a major impact on its ability to deliver the services needed by its supported communities.

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The ShoreTel (now Mitel) UC solution designed by Calibre One provides Ironbark with a single, voice over IP (VoIP) solution across all nine sites with direct dialling to all staff across the region. Staff visiting one of Ironbark’s three main sites are now able to login to any ShoreTel (now Mitel) handset so their extension follows them, making it much easier for them to be reached.

ShoreTel (now Mitel) Connect is integrated with Microsoft Skype for Business, part of Ironbark’s new Office 365 deployment. This provides users with a single interface for calls, instant messaging, user presence information, point-to-point video and audio/video conferencing. It

also integrates with users’ Microsoft Outlook for voicemail and scheduling conference calls.

“With our new UC solution, our staff are feeling closer to each other and much more connected,” said Mr Shirley.

### **Speed and Reliability**

“Our users have experienced vastly improved speeds and accessibility to key applications. Good network performance means no more latency in application response times slowing down our work,” said Mr Shirley.

“Calibre One’s helpdesk has been very good and they are always available. I’ve had positive feedback from our staff that the Calibre One helpdesk team has been very helpful and by all accounts they are very happy with the change. Our internal IT complaints inbox is now empty.”

### **Future Plans**

Ironbark plans to introduce additional UC functionality on the ShoreTel (now Mitel) platform and via the integrated desktop client and, to complement this, there is an education and training program to be rolled out to all Ironbark users on the system.

Chris Shirley is also excited by the potential that improved mobility will bring. “We are looking to roll out VoIP on mobile and to manage mobile data better. We want to bring down our mobile phone costs and we want our people to be less reliant on their mobile phones and 4G.”

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