

Education

Promoting **sustainable** futures

University of Waikato

Working with Lenovo, the University of Waikato is taking big steps to reduce the environmental impact of its ICT services.



Lenovo

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Who is the University of Waikato?

The University of Waikato in New Zealand is committed to delivering world-class education and driving cutting-edge research. With around 13,000 students and 1,500 staff, it offers a distinctive and rewarding university experience, while pursuing strong international links to advance knowledge. The university offers a broad range of degrees, diplomas, and certificates in over 100 subjects from its Hamilton and Tauranga campuses.

Māori students are visible and actively engaged in all aspects of university life, through a dedicated leadership role in the Waikato Students' Union, Māori student groups across the university, and Pūtikitiki—the university's Māori student space.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

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The Challenge

The University of Waikato is committed to sustainability, and to helping find solutions for critical environmental problems. The [United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#) underpin all activities at the institution, and serve as a valuable framework for how the university is addressing some of the biggest challenges facing humanity through research, teaching, and external engagement—and ICT services are no exception.

Hamish Hamilton, ICT Procurement Operations Lead at the University of Waikato, explains: “Technology is energy and resource intensive. In terms of client endpoints, manufacture makes up the majority of the carbon footprint of a device and this is something that we have no control over. Therefore, we’re always looking for different ways to reduce our impact on the environment.”

As part of a major reorganization of its IT estate, the university looked for a new technology partner for client endpoints. Naturally, the vendor’s Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy was a key consideration.



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“All the vendors we considered promoted their ESG credentials, but we felt that Lenovo was the most genuine. Sustainability wasn’t just an afterthought or an add-on service, but a core component of Lenovo’s products and services.”

Hamish Hamilton

ICT Procurement Operations Lead,
University of Waikato

Responsible IT

The University of Waikato selected Lenovo as its preferred vendor for client endpoints. Together, the university and Lenovo have taken several important steps to reduce CO₂ emissions and waste.

Today, devices are replaced based on need, not purchase history. As a result, the University of Waikato purchases fewer devices and improves utilization. What's more, with Lenovo's CO₂ Offset Service, the university can offset the CO₂ emissions of every single endpoint from manufacture, shipping, energy usage, and end-of-life. Each device serial number is tied to the environmental project that its purchase supports, so the university can see exactly where the contribution goes and what impact it has. To further reduce emissions, the university also prefers low-carbon ocean freight and takes advantage of bulk packaging services.

Services

- Lenovo Bulk Packaging
- Lenovo CO₂ Offset Services
- Lenovo Ocean Freight Service

Hardware

- Lenovo ThinkCentre M75q
- Lenovo ThinkPad P1
- Lenovo ThinkPad P14s
- Lenovo ThinkPad X1 Yoga
- Lenovo ThinkStation P3

Software

- CO₂ offset tracking via the Lenovo ServiceConnect portal
- Absolute Software for asset management



“Lenovo CO₂ Offset Services is a unique and innovative offering. The carbon offsets are verified by independent third parties and support projects that advance the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. We’re proud that carbon credits from University of Waikato devices support geothermal, wind power, and methane reduction projects as far afield as Indonesia, Argentina, Mexico, and South Korea. As well as offsetting CO₂ emissions, they also bring other benefits such as public infrastructure, jobs for locals, and energy resilience.”

Hamish Hamilton

ICT Procurement Operations Lead, University of Waikato

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Results

The University of Waikato has purchased 678 Lenovo devices eligible for carbon credits to date, offsetting 725.5 tons of CO₂. And by switching from air to ocean freight, the university has reduced transportation emissions by 310%.

“Given our geographical position, ocean freight can take 8-10 weeks to arrive,” says Hamish Hamilton. “We’ve had to change our practices and spend a little more time on demand planning, but the results are worth it. Selecting ocean over air freight is a relatively simple change to make, but one that has a significant impact on our carbon footprint.”

With bulk packaging, the university typically uses a single cardboard box for up to 10 Lenovo devices. This not only reduces packaging waste but also ensures efficient pallet utilization, thus helping to reduce emissions during shipping. Based on these and many other initiatives across the organization, [the University of Waikato has been recognized in the top 100 universities worldwide in the 2024 QS Sustainability rankings.](#)



725.5 tons CO₂
emissions offset for
678 Lenovo devices



310% reduction
in transportation
emissions



99th in the 2024 QS
Sustainability rankings

Reduce, reuse, recycle

At the end of the lifecycle, the University of Waikato works with local partner PB Technology (a Lenovo Platinum Business Partner) to dispose of devices as safely and sustainably as possible. Eligible devices are donated to disadvantaged schools in the Bay of Plenty region to help promote more equitable outcomes for students. Even broken devices are donated for use in an IT program, supported by the university, that teaches kids how to repair and build laptops.

Any remaining devices are then resold into the New Zealand market by PB Technology or, if unsuitable for resale, responsibly recycled by PB Technology and their e-waste partners. This includes the recovery of plastics, metals, and precious metals, so as little as possible ends up in landfill.



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“We’ve only been working with Lenovo for just over a year, but we’ve already achieved so much together in terms of improving the sustainability of our IT services. We look forward to continuing to build on the relationship.”

Hamish Hamilton

ICT Procurement Operations Lead,
University of Waikato

Why **Lenovo**?

It was Lenovo's commitment to sustainability that made it the right partner for the University of Waikato. "Lenovo understood the vision we had for our endpoint fleet and shared our belief that sustainability is a necessity, not an add-on," says Hamish Hamilton. "We know that Lenovo takes its ESG responsibilities seriously, as demonstrated by its commitment to digital inclusion for the Māori community."

In 2023, Lenovo launched an [Aotearoa New Zealand bilingual keyboard](#) that enables users to write seamlessly in the indigenous language, te reo Māori. This keyboard is available to students and staff at the University of Waikato on certain devices to support their work and studies.



How can universities make their ICT services more sustainable?

Working with Lenovo, the University of Waikato is reducing CO₂ emissions and waste.

[Explore Lenovo Sustainability Solutions](#)