

Replacing a reactive IT provider with a strategic, proactive IT partner

How Selection Steel went looking for better IT support and succeeded in securing so much more.

2021 will mark the 50th year of operation for Selection Steel, a privately owned business delivering customised steel sheet and coil solutions for the steel and construction industries across Australia.

Their 85-strong team are spread across six sites Australia-wide, all comprising of head office, warehousing and production facilities. Despite their dispersed nature, the entire team have three key things in common: **a commitment to product quality, passion for innovation**, and a drive to **deliver superior customer service**.

As a growing business in a highly competitive sector with a dispersed workforce and a number of third-party product vendors, Selection Steel understood the **need for an IT Service provider who would extend beyond just delivering functional day-to-day IT services**.

Selection Steel's IT manager, Darryn Francis, joined the firm in 2017 and laid down the challenge for the incumbent outsourced IT provider to lift their level of support to meet the company's requirements. Darryn was pleased when the provider responded with renewed service vigour.

However, a short time later, a shift in the IT provider's delivery (which included moving all but one service support role overseas) saw service levels return to the status quo. It became apparent that **Selection Steel needed a new provider and new approach**.

Selection Steel needed a supplier who had the **same passion for service, commitment to innovation, and culture of accountability that they delivered**. With Darryn's expertise built on delivering business outcomes versus technology delivery, they also needed a provider who was at the top of their game and across the latest in IT & T.

When looking for a new supplier, it was critical that they could provide:

- A local support team
- Dedicated ownership of tasks
- Expert technical knowledge
- Support across all IT functions



Ready to make a change

Selection Steel considered four different providers of different sizes, and ultimately determined that they needed a midsized company that could understand their business, and their extensive IT needs.

In their search, **Step Fwd IT** stood out. The Selection Steel team were impressed with Director Chris Mannering, his understanding of their business and his genuine believability. They also felt like Step Fwd IT understood their needs better and could offer a more comprehensive service than some of the other candidates.

“We needed more than high level server and device management – we needed someone who could manage and take full ownership of everything IT on our behalf.” - **Darryn Francis, IT Manager, Selection Steel**

After meeting the Step Fwd IT engineers and being assured that Chris and the team could act as a full extension of their business, Darryn felt comfortable **that Step Fwd IT would be able to deliver the services Selection Steel needed.**

A smooth transition

Like with any big shift, Darryn admitted that he was nervous and even a bit sceptical about a big change, unsure about the potential issues they might face along the way. Luckily, their exiting vendor was accommodating, and Darryn worked with both them and the Step Fwd IT team to transition everything over.



An experienced manager, Darryn fully expected that the first couple of months may include some transition challenges, in particular as this shift included removing the old providers software from Selection Steel’s devices and moving to the next generation platform being deployed by Step Fwd IT. Happily, the experience was smoother than expected and Step Fwd IT resolved everything in a timely manner and took ownership from day one.

“There were no major issues – it was a seamless transition overall” - **Darryn Francis, IT Manager, Selection Steel**

The result: IT that does more than fix problems

Since changing providers, the difference in service delivery and task ownership has been like night and day. But beyond that, Selection Steel have discovered an extensive range of improvements and benefits:

- **More expertise at a lower cost**

Selection Steel now have a level of IT understanding and execution that would require the equivalent of three full-time, high level internal staff. They have access to more people power when they need it, but aren’t worrying about having to pay staff during slow periods, making it a much more cost-effective setup.

- **Proactive IT strategies**

Rather than a purely reactive service that focuses on only fixing what’s broken, Step Fwd IT have taken a proactive approach to Selection Steel’s IT, recommending changes to systems and infrastructure that will benefit the business long term.

“Helping us with our IT direction moving forward and being able to justify their recommendations, that’s been really big for us.” - **Darryn Francis, IT Manager, Selection Steel**

- **Local support**

They now have a higher level of support that is all Australian based. The entire Selection Steel team has instant access to IT support, and can either talk to a support agent over the phone immediately, or organise to get somebody onsite.

- **Complete business understanding**

Step Fwd IT has exceeded Darryn and the team's expectations with their willingness to fully understand Selection Steel's business, provide support and take responsibility for anything IT related. Darryn has been equally impressed with their ability to deal with all third-party vendors.

“Step Fwd IT has a good mix of senior and mid-level engineers, so I felt comfortable they would be able to resolve critical issues quickly and efficiently - which has proven to be the case.” - **Darryn Francis, IT Manager, Selection Steel**

Don't be scared of chasing better IT

Ultimately, Darryn feels like they found a great match in terms of their business size and needs fitting what Step Fwd IT could deliver. Making a big change in order to find the service they knew they needed was completely worth it.

By outsourcing through Step Fwd IT, Selection Steel has found they can still experience all the great features of internal IT support, including everyday support, a genuine interest and understanding of their business, a good relationship with employees and a sense that success is mutual. But on top of that, they also get the benefits of more resources, lower costs, and not having to 'go it alone'.

“The benefit of going with Step Fwd IT is you don't have to win this internally. You gain access to a greater wealth of resources, a higher level of service, plus they genuinely want you to succeed.” - **Darryn Francis, IT Manager, Selection Steel**

If you're looking for an improved IT service that can **understand** your business, **support** your staff and **deliver** proactive IT management and support, lets talk.