



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Finance and Administration Committee
From: Commissioner of Corporate Services
Report: #2026-A-6
Date: March 10, 2026

Subject:

Information Technology Equipment and Cabling Standardizations

Recommendation:

That the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That Lenovo's suite of end user computing devices be approved as the corporate standard until December 31, 2031, to ensure compatibility and efficient maintenance and support of the existing devices;
 - B) That Apple iOS-based mobile devices be approved as the corporate standard until December 31, 2031, to ensure secure lifecycle management and a consistent end user experience; and
 - C) That the standardization of Belden for replacement, upgrade, addition, and new implementation of networking and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) cabling for Regional facilities be extended for six years, until December 31, 2031.
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Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks Council approval to standardize several information technology (IT) products including Lenovo's suite of end user computing devices, Apple iOS-based mobile devices, and Belden networking and VoIP cabling until December 31, 2031.

2. Background

- 2.1 Regional Council has previously approved information technology standardizations, where the original procurement was through a competitive process. These standardizations ensure consistency and compatibility as well as improve the efficiency of maintenance and support.

- 2.2 The information technology standardizations are not intended to restrict the Region to only a specific set of products as exceptions will be required in specialized cases. The standardizations are intended to manage operational risks, protect system integrity, avoid unnecessary redesign and reconfiguration, and minimize the impact of technical issues and upgrades on productivity.
- 2.3 A review of these standardized products will be conducted prior to the expiration, in advance of proposed extensions, to determine whether the Region should pursue a new product through a competitive procurement that may better fit requirements at that time.
- 2.4 To improve future reporting, the recommended end dates align with the expiry of a standardization on Commvault's suite of data backup and recovery products, previously approved through December 31, 2031.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 In June 2015, Regional Council, through Report [#2015-A-24](#), approved the standardization on Belden cabling for a period of five years.
- 3.2 In November 2020, Regional Council, through Report [#2020-A-23](#), approved the extension of the standardization on Belden cabling for an additional five years.
- 3.3 In October 2024, Regional Council, through Report [#2024-A-14](#), approved the standardization on Commvault's suite of data backup and recovery products until December 31, 2031.

4. Information Technology Standards

Lenovo End User Computing Devices

- 4.1 The Region purchases end user computing through a Provincial Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangement established in 2022 by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services which was the result of an open and competitive process (Request for Bids # Tender_14952). The Region adopted the VOR in May 2022. The agreement established through the VOR allows for the purchase of Lenovo hardware and has been providing discounts off Lenovo's published Canadian list prices resulting in savings for the Region.
- 4.2 Over the last four years, the replacement of desktops and laptops through the above-noted Provincial VOR has resulted in 91% of end user computing devices in the Region currently being Lenovo hardware.
- 4.3 The Region's IT environment has been designed, configured, and maintained to support Lenovo computers, including device deployment processes, support knowledge base, and spare parts such as Lenovo docking stations.

- 4.4 The support of computing devices from other manufacturers, requires substantial additional effort per model to update and test deployment plans and standard images verifying compatibility, and therefore extends the transition time to deploy or replace end user computing devices as it increases the size of the customization. It further requires the Region to stock spare accessories for the other original equipment manufacturer (OEM) devices, maintain support articles for issues that arise, and may require additional training. While the Region must maintain support for a few models for replacement, the substantial duplication of effort required beyond those few models creates operational inefficiency.
- 4.5 From a security perspective, the support of additional device models requires that additional hardware, firmware, and applications from the device manufacturer are monitored for vulnerabilities and patched regularly.
- 4.6 The recommended standardization enables IT staff to further develop specialized knowledge that results in more efficient troubleshooting, maintenance, and repair activities as well as reduces duplication of onboarding effort and time spent on device replacement.

Apple iOS-Based Mobile Devices

- 4.7 The Region subscribes to cell phone services through a Provincial Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangement which was the result of an open and competitive process completed by Supply Ontario (Tender-18677 - Mobile Devices and Services). The VOR resulted in favourable cellular/mobility service pricing and smartphone purchase and replacement discounts.
- 4.8 Primarily, the purchase and replacement of smartphones through the above-noted Provincial VOR and the prior Provincial VOR resulted in 93% of mobile devices in the Region being Apple iOS-based.
- 4.9 The practice of purchasing and replacing iOS-based mobile devices with the base model, resulted in significant savings for the Region and with Apple's support model allows the Region to ensure the corporate devices support the current operating system, apps, and have security patches available throughout the lifecycle of the device.
- 4.10 Apple iOS meets the Region's security requirements and integrates well with the Region's systems and Microsoft 365. Using Apple Business Manager, at no additional cost to the Region, Apple locks iPhones purchased by the Region to the Region's systems ensuring that lost or stolen iPhones can be wiped and even if reset, are unusable unless released by the Region.
- 4.11 A standardization on iOS-based mobile devices simplifies and reduces the time to onboard new technologies and plan major changes as the compatibility is verified and tested with a single mobile platform instead of duplicate processes to verify compatibility with multiple platforms and potentially, multiple operating system versions on alternative platforms.

- 4.12 Standardizing on Apple iOS-based mobile devices allows the Region to ensure the secure lifecycle of mobile devices, ensures a consistent user experience avoiding time loss for re-training and familiarization during device replacement, and reduces staff time maintaining and troubleshooting multiple configuration sets and controls.

Belden Network Cabling

- 4.13 When Regional Headquarters was established in 2005, Belden was selected as the manufacturer of the structured cabling used throughout the facility handle the Quality of Service (QoS) and Power over Ethernet (PoE) requirements of the new Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telecommunications system. As the new facility was built and the network cabling completed, Regional staff were trained and certified to support and maintain the corporate network.
- 4.14 Belden offers a certification program, which allows participants to make changes to the network provided they utilize Belden cable and follow the implementation standards. With certified installations a 25-year warranty period against defects in materials and workmanship is provided and ensures that all structured cabling installations meet or exceed industry standard requirements.
- 4.15 Over the years additional Belden cabling implementations have been conducted throughout many Regional facilities to provide VoIP telecommunication services.
- 4.16 From an administrative perspective, staff have completed processes to source Belden cable specifically, rather than other types of cabling. Given the training and certification requirements around cabling, and the existing Regional investments and use of Belden cabling in Regional facilities, standardization can be justified. For example, when troubleshooting issues, the cabling standard affords certain minimum specifications. If the installation meets these standards staff can determine quickly where the issue lies, improving response and issue resolution times, ultimately improving the user experience. Where cables provided by different manufacturers are used, technicians would need to consider both cabling types, which may add some risk and/or delays when troubleshooting with multiple manufacturers. In addition, Regional staff and external contractors are certified to install and repair this cabling in all Regional locations that have been built, are being built, or upgraded. The Belden cabling has proven, in a Regional context, to work well with the current technology infrastructure in place.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Region of Durham's Purchasing By-law #16-2020 – Section 3.1.5 allows for the standardization of goods wherever possible.
- 5.2 Standardization of equipment does not preclude a competitive process for acquisition, as there are multiple vendors who would have the ability to bid on each approved standard equipment type.

5.3 Funding for the acquisition of devices, equipment and cabling for upgrades or replacements at Regional facilities will be included in the annual Business Plans and Budgets through to December 31, 2031.

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

a. Connected and Vibrant Communities

- C5. Improve digital connectivity and multi-channel access to information, resources, and service navigation.

b. Strong Relationships

- S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.

6.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

a. Technology: Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

7. Conclusion

7.1 This report requests that the Finance and Administration Committee recommend to Regional Council establishing the following information technology standards until December 31, 2031

- a. Lenovo's suite of end user computing devices,
- b. Apple iOS-based mobile devices, and
- c. Belden network cabling.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Barb Goodwin, MPA, CPA/CGA,
B.Comm, CPM, CMMIII
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer