

Watts IT energy saving all about?

Written by Andrew Dent

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The European Union has finally outlawed the 100 watt incandescent light bulb and I'm guessing that it won't be long before the other bulbs in the range face the same fate.

The axe falling on the 100 watt is long overdue because most of us got the message long ago and switched to energy-saving bulbs. We're that well versed in saving cash and doing our little bit for the planet that we don't need convincing of the stats any more. However it still brings a little smile to my face when I read that the Energy Saving Trust says energy-saving bulbs cut the average UK household's annual energy bill by up to £37 and save 135kg of CO2 each year.

It was a no brainer to do it in the first place and took a matter of seconds to replace all the lights in my Birmingham flat and I sat back and watched myself saving money straight away.

So if that was so easy for me and thousands like me, why are some people still suspicious when you suggest other ways to save energy and therefore money?

As the light bulb has proved, technology always finds a way to exponentially improve things and the shift isn't so much in the technology itself but the leap of faith required by those who use it. Thankfully early adopters jump on good ideas and show others the way and things come into the mainstream when enough people have the confidence to use the technology. It's a pattern we see time and again.

And whilst the development of most IT has focused on making things faster, smaller and more powerful, energy consumption is now overtaking the other three to become the cornerstone of progress.

Over the last couple of years we've seen the introduction of IT where the main USP is its energy efficiency. For example there are Thin Client desktops that use up to 20 times less power than conventional systems. This can take usage down from 100 watts to as little as five. And the beauty is the user experience isn't compromised one iota.

Similarly there are servers flooding the market that are twice as powerful as their predecessors and use less than half the power. If that's progress why stop there: why does a business need so much hardware? We are currently starting a project with one client where they should be able to go from 70 servers to six or even four, whilst at the same time improving the performance of their network.

The technology is readily available right now but it will only fly off the shelves when more people have a light bulb moment. And arriving at that epiphany might be because of frustration at high fuel bills, a need to upgrade to cheaper IT or when one of our light bulb sales team comes knocking at their door.

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