Case study
Professional Services

Many VM's make short work of long task

How VDI can be adopted to solve specific issues many companies face

KPMG

We partnered with: **vmware**

The customer

One of the leading accounting firms in the United Kingdom, and part of one of the largest integrated accounting firms in Europe, with over 14,000 employees working in 153 countries worldwide, providing professional services including tax advisory, pensions and audit.

The challenge

The customer in this scenario had a specific use case, where at the close of a financial engagement, they are required to collate all financial documentation and intellectual property generated, then compile it into a report and archive.

This "closeout process" had traditionally been time and resource intensive, leaving the engagement accountant unable to use their PC for many hours. The process was also prone to error and might have to be restarted many times.

Previous attempts to improve the process saw a central team undertake the closeouts which led to a cumbersome approach where meeting rooms were dedicated to many physical PCs running closeouts, with staff running between them.

Peak demand could also lead to a backlog of work and a failure to reach targets.

The solution

A VMware View virtual desktop solution was selected to run stateless pooled virtual desktops dedicated to the closeout process.

This allowed the closeout teams to run many simultaneous closeouts and manage them from a single workstation. The increased compute resource available to the virtual desktops allowed the closeouts to process more quickly, by many hours, than on a traditional workstation and with greater reliability due to the most up to date software and OS tuning.

The newly designed Windows 7 stateless desktop allowed each closeout to be run on a machine that was reverted to the base build after use, minimising the impact of any leftover residue from the previous task.

VMware View security servers were used to provide secure remote access to field accountants, allowing them to process closeouts from customer sites without impacting their own laptops.

The overall result designed and delivered by Xtravirt was a resounding success; resolving a previously long-term issue with a neat targeted solution, reducing closeout time, reducing failed closeouts, and freeing up significant staff time to focus on other business priorities.

Project at a glance

Requirements

- Identify a suitable platform for processing financial closeout operations
- Build & test the selected solution and benchmark against current processes
- Deliver Windows 7 with the latest closeout software and tune the image to provide optimal performance
- Enable fast seamless updates to the closeout application
- Enable international and remote access
- Scale elastically to meet peak demands

Solution

- VMware View, dedicated to performing 200 simultaneous financial closeouts
- vSphere 5 on HP hardware and storage
- Optimised Windows 7 pooled desktops stateless machines, easily updated
- DR solution for the View infrastructure for business continuity
- Tuned PCoIP for optimised international access across the WAN
- VMware View Security Servers with RSA two-factor authentication for secure access

Results

- Reduced closeout time by 25%, typically to 3 hours from 4
- Reduced failed closeouts to "one in 100" from "one in 10"
- Secure centralised desktops and data

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Consultant commentary

"This is a prime example of Xtravirt's ability to deliver tailored solutions to meet exacting customer requirements. Understanding the issues faced by the customer, the correct technology for the solution, along with the knowledge to deliver and integrate it, are just some of the core value-add that Xtravirt provides."

Darren McDonagh, Senior Consultant, Xtravirt

The results

- The customer had reached a point where they could no longer process closeouts on time which could lead to penalties or governance failures. Xtravirt were able to deliver a solution that allowed all targets to be met and provide additional capacity for future growth.
- Moving to virtual desktops removed the need for the space and power for dedicated physical machine, and returned much needed resources back to the business

- Windows 7 was delivered specifically for the project, Xtravirt's optimised Operating System image design was key to improving performance and throughput
- The modular design based on VMware View "Blocks" and "Pods" allowed future growth and scale
- Significant time savings for valuable accountant professionals, freeing up more time to focus on customers rather than IT

About Xtravirt

Xtravirt is a leading, independent provider of enterprise virtualisation solutions. We deliver data centre, workspace and cloud transformational solutions to clients across public and private sectors, both in the UK and internationally.

Our consulting organisation is recognised globally for contributions to industry and community development which, combined with our astute management, methodology and proven track record, provide unsurpassed value to our customers.

Please visit our case study library at xtravirt.com where you can read more of our success stories.

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