

VIRTUAL DESKTOP INFRASTRUCTURE



Getronics

a KPN company

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THIS DOCUMENT DESCRIBES THE GETRONICS POSITION TOWARDS VIRTUAL DESKTOP INFRASTRUCTURE (VDI). VDI IS THE TECHNIQUE TO USE HOSTED VIRTUAL DESKTOPS (FULL FAT-CLIENT USER ENVIRONMENTS, CONSISTING OF OPERATING SYSTEM AND APPLICATIONS, RUNNING AS VIRTUAL MACHINES IN A DATACENTER). THESE VIRTUAL DESKTOPS ARE ACCESSED ACROSS THE NETWORK VIA A PC/LAPTOP WITH A SOFTWARE AGENT INSTALLED OR VIA A THIN-CLIENT DEVICE.

VDI provides a solution for market trends like centralization, enhanced security, data centric computing and green-IT, by putting all data and applications into the data center and providing the end-user with a low power thin-client device. Getronics helps customers in leveraging flexibility, cost-reduction and meeting business requirements by choosing the optimal solution. VDI is one of the ways to achieve the goals of a company in optimizing the workspace. VDI will be a way to deliver desktop functionality in Future-Ready Workspace next to the current fat client and (thin-client) Citrix Server Based Computing (SBC) way of offering a desktop. As a leading workspace management party Getronics is able to help customers make the correct decisions in balancing end-user needs to business requirements.

THE BENEFITS OF VDI

The use of VDI is possible for part of the desktops in many organizations. VDI is best suitable for so called task workers; call-center agents, contact centers personnel, tele-workers and data entry employees, are typical examples who traditionally have a LAN-attached desktop with a compact set of local, web and mainframe based applications. Organizations benefit from VDI when fast desktop deployment is a must, like education and software development. The usage of VDI is not limited to a certain market sector. The finance industry, the utility sector and government are especially interested and have done the most pilots and early implementations as of today.

Key factors in adopting VDI for many companies are:

- The advantages of central management of the desktops in the datacenter.
- Increased security because all applications and data stay in the datacenter, with the possibility to remove all user specific sessions and information once logged off.
- The low TCO of thin-client devices compared to desktops due to low initial cost and longer depreciating period.
- Very limited on-site support needed; no moving parts so less failures and no software installed on the device: just an easy swap is enough to provide full end-user functionality again, after a thin-client gets broken.

- End users like VDI better than SBC: Fewer limitations for the end-user because every user has its own OS compared to the rigid multi-user situation with SBC.
- The greenness of VDI: low power consumption of thin-clients compared to desktops.
- The possibility to have persistent sessions that can be used from various endpoints (in the office, on the road on a connected laptop from a mobile device and from a home PC) without restarting or closing applications.

VDI IS NOT ALWAYS THE BEST SOLUTION

Certain implications of a VDI make it not suitable for every organization or every user:

- Although customers are replacing desktops with thin-client devices that cost less, last longer and use less energy these cost savings can be eliminated by additional servers, extra storage, extra datacenter space and additional management software.
- The management of the centralized virtual environment requires changed processes and additional tooling. Managing numerous PC images, expanding storage and lots of unique configurations for non-standard users in the datacenter is challenging.
- Software licensing is often not in favor of VDI yet because of the licensing models of software vendors, leading to additional license management and the payment of multiple licenses for a user's desktop environment.
- Because VDI will not be suitable for all workspaces in a company a mix of VDI and traditional desktops will exist, adding complexity to the IT management.
- For VDI to work the reliability and the quality of the network to the datacenter is very important and so is the datacenter availability itself, this is true for most environments.
- The connection from the end-user in the office to his or her virtual desktop in the datacenter is done by some sort of remote desktop protocol. These protocols are improving but can still be limiting the use of multimedia rich applications.

ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Getronics is constant looking for the best way to serve our customers. Knowledge and best practices are bundled in the Future-Ready Workspace concept. Within Future-Ready Workspace Fat clients, PC's and laptops are incorporated so are thin-clients, in conjunction to a centralized desktop environment. Part of our services is to research , together with our customers, for the optimal way to offer desktop functionality to the end-users. Companies who meet the following requirements are recommended to investigate the usage of VDI because they will most likely benefit from it:

- Repetitive and fast deployment of new desktop images (e.g. education/ development sector).
- Remote locations in use with limited on-site support possibilities.
- Companies with task-workers using a limited set of applications without the need for multimedia capabilities.
- Customers who are looking for a secure and flexible desktop solution.
- When there is need for user- sessions being transferred from one physical workplace to another without logoff/logon (fast workplace switching, the workspace in the datacenter is only displayed on another display).
- Not being dependent on multimedia solutions like IPT softphones (with the use of new terminal protocols the combination VDI and IPT softphone is possible, but the requirements on the network in terms of bandwidth and especially latency are still high).

More information

If you would like to talk to Getronics about investigating the benefits from VDI, please contact maps@getronics.com.
