

Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity

User Virtualization Management for Desktop Disaster Recovery in Virtual and Physical Environments



Traditional desktop disaster recovery is a long accepted best practice in the industry for ensuring that mission critical business data is never lost and that user productivity is minimized in the event of a local data or widespread disaster of desktop infrastructure.

Most commonly, desktop disaster recovery solutions work by creating an image-based or file-by-file backup of a user's workstation. These individual desktop backup methods are often fraught with error prone scenarios that often render recoveries unstable or completely impossible.

For example, because the traditional file-by-file backup process can be CPU, memory, and storage device intensive, desktops are best backed up when users are offline. However, often desktops need to run 24x7 in these scenarios causing a hit and miss approach to backup as well as large amounts of wasted power consumption. Problems can also result when open file backups are attempted because most backup programs cannot easily backup open files. More specifically, email data stores and database related applications are often left out of the backup equation altogether.

Image-based backups have emerged in the last ten years as a superior method for backing up any type of PC or server. Rather than backing up a system on an individual file basis, these technologies take a 'snapshot' of a PC's or server's hard drive contents and then use the entire image to restore a machine if needed. The process is much quicker and arguably more dependable than file-by-file solutions.

Streamlined Disaster Recovery - Leveraging Master Images and a Layered User Environment

Many organizations now also leverage image-based technology to build a master image(s) for physical desktops or virtual desktops. The base operating system is first considered for the image as well as any default application(s) that may or may not be included in the master image design. In the event of a physical or virtual desktop disaster, a user can have their base desktop restored with the appropriate image within only a few minutes. There are obvious omissions to this approach as it omits the most critical information from a desktop environment, the user's data, their persona, and configuration.

Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity is a leading solution that enables full desktop disaster recovery when leveraging master image restores for virtual and physical environments. ProfileUnity separately stores user persona and configurations at every logoff and ensures that they are available at every login, even on new desktops, non-persistent VDI implementations, and reimaged workstations. The solution also enables immediate access to user-authored data stored on a disaster recovery or replicated network drive.

How it Works: ProfileUnity manages users' profiles and ensures that they are available at logon, regardless of which Microsoft OS version they sign onto, Windows XP or Windows 7. ProfileUnity has built in folder redirection that easily redirects common "save to" and "save as" areas so user documents will be saved to and accessed from network storage areas going forward rather than each individual PC hard drive or persistent disk in your organization.

What's Backed Up: ProfileUnity backs up user profiles and grants instant access to redirected user-authored data. Settings that can be set to be backed up include:

- The user profile
- User-authored data in the user's profile
- Application level settings such as spell checkers, MS Office customizations

- MAPI and Outlook settings and signatures
- Admin settings
- User level system registry settings
- Drive settings, printer settings, and more

What's Needed:

- A current Windows Desktop Network Environment with a Domain Controller or a DFS Replicated Server for storage
- Your deployed Windows 7, Citrix XenApp, Citrix XenDesktop, or VMware View environment
- Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity License

How to Implement:

- Download Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity as either a virtual machine for VMware servers or as a standalone Windows installer <http://www.liquidwarelabs.com/download/downloads.asp>
- Obtain a full Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity license for purchase by emailing sales@liquidwarelabs.com
- Install ProfileUnity into your existing environment and enable the profile portability features in ProfileUnity to enable profiles and settings to be backed up. <http://www.liquidwarelabs.com/demos>
- Enable ProfileUnity's built-in folder redirection module to redirect folders and optionally begin moving local user-authored data, such as Word Documents, Pictures, etc., to the users' network file share.
- After all users have had a chance to login and out at least once, your user profiles are backed up. User-authored data being migrated to DR protected servers in the background will occur based on bandwidth throttling that you set during install.
- You will also have full use of all other ProfileUnity user environment management features. ProfileUnity's environment management features enable administrator's to full administer user settings such as drive and printer mappings, application shortcuts, IP settings, MAPI profile creation, and more.

ProfileUnity uniquely separates the personalization of Windows, including the user profile, and stores it to the users' network share drive.

How to Restore a Failed Physical or Virtual Desktop:

It's easy to fully restore a user's desktop with ProfileUnity while leveraging a master image built for a VMware, Citrix, or physical environment. Simply enable the user to login to a newly imaged physical PC or a non-persistent VDI session. Ensure that the user authenticates to the Windows domain. ProfileUnity will automatically run in only seconds (7-10 seconds avg) at logon, without installing any software on the client.

The user will then be fully productive in their familiar desktop environment with their user persona (profile) and configuration having been fully restored by ProfileUnity. They will also have instant access to user-authored data on a DR protected drive via ProfileUnity folder redirection. With base image recovery and ProfileUnity used as a desktop recovery method, it's as if it a disaster never happened.

An additional related Whitepaper is also available at <http://www.liquidwarelabs.com/company/whitepapers.asp> For more information including a fully functional trial download of ProfileUnity, visit www.LiquidwareLabs.com or email sales@liquidwarelabs.com.