

Case Study

Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity performs Seamless Citrix XenDesktop Migration and ongoing User Environment Management for Leading Lending Processing Company

Overview

Liquidware Labs and Citrix have a joint customer moving more than 1,200 users to Citrix XenDesktop from Windows XP physical machines and Citrix XenApp 5.0. The customer is a California based company that is a leading provider of integrated technology and services to the mortgage and real estate industries. The customer's users are located in five physical offices across the USA.

The Challenge

The IT staff was faced with the challenge of moving users from Windows XP physical machines and Citrix XenApp 5.0 to Citrix XenDesktop. The goal was to accomplish this while preserving users' existing familiar environment and application-level settings without losing any Windows native desktop configurations. If a solution could be found to automate user and data migration, hundreds of man-hours could be saved compared to more cumbersome methods.

Several variables were considered. Any solution had to be able to:

- Automatically migrate existing XP Windows (Physical and XenApp 5) native user settings and documents to Citrix XenDesktop
- Have a zero touch design so users could log onto any Windows experience without a required agent or additional application overhead
- Seamlessly move the user from a v1 (XP/2000) to a v2 (Vista/Win7) profile and back again if necessary
- Have an easy-to-scale and server-less architecture to lower install and maintenance costs

Leaving the data in Windows native format was a very key factor for the customer. The customer expressed that they did not want to be locked in to a third-party application or proprietary database for user environment data. This approach would allow them to consider other profile solutions such as Citrix UPM at a later date while keeping the data fully intact.

The Solution

The customer only found one solution that met all of their needs, Liquidware Labs ProfileUnity. ProfileUnity has a zero agent design that only runs at logon and logoff. User profiles and data are harvested and restored in Windows' own native format and the solution seamlessly supports both v1 and v2 profile formats. This approach enables true Windows migrations from XP/2000 to Citrix XenDesktop running XP and/or Windows 7 as well as other similar physical and virtual Windows platforms.

The customer implemented ProfileUnity by installing Liquidware Labs' easy to install virtual appliance. Next, ProfileUnity's Central Management Console was used to configure the settings for profile portability, folder redirection to the network, and data migration. Finally, the customer applied the network based executable by turning on a simple Group Policy logon and logoff setting for the selected users.

When users logged into their next Windows session on their physical Windows XP PCs and Citrix XenApp sessions, ProfileUnity ran in approximately 7 seconds, to ensure that the environment was customized per the IT staff's settings. Document and data migration began to automatically occur in the background using the staff's preset

ProfileUnity throttling feature, ensuring network performance was not affected. When users logged off, any environment changes were immediately saved with ProfileUnity.

After a couple of weeks to ensure that background document migration was complete (dependent on throttled document migration settings), the IT staff simply had users log into their new Citrix XenDesktop session. Within about three seconds (time further reduced due to the increased speed of HDX and other high-performance features from Citrix) each user was completely migrated to XenDesktop.

The Benefits

Now ProfileUnity provides complete Workspace/Environment Management in Windows own native format. Users are now free to logon to any Windows physical PC, Citrix XenApp, or Citrix XenDesktop in the enterprise and their Windows workspace is instantly made available on their chosen session within seconds via ProfileUnity.

The lead administrator summed up the project saying, “We really like the fact that the data is kept in Windows own native format for best practices in data storage. Compared to other solutions that necessitate one to three dedicated servers for their infrastructure, ProfileUnity was extremely easy to implement by simply relying on the secure user store and flat .ini files for configuration. Scalability has been a non-issue. With ProfileUnity, we were up and running quickly and there were no SQL servers to procure or manage and the installation was very straight-forward. ProfileUnity met and exceeded all of our needs while the price was only a fraction of the next closest competitor. The solution is transparent to end-users – I even use it to manage my own workspace across multiple versions of Windows and Citrix desktops. We are very satisfied with the combination of ProfileUnity and Citrix XenDesktop.”

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