

VMware virtualisation solution reduces desktop administration costs for Asiana

Asiana

industry:

Travel and Transportation

country:

Czech Republic

business challenge:

To simplify the administration and software maintenance of the desktop fleet to reduce potential risks and related operational costs

solution:

Creating a virtualised desktop fleet to enable centralised, automated software maintenance and administration

services:

- Planning services for desktop virtualisation
- Deployment services of the VMware virtual infrastructure

results:

- Central installation of desktop fleet ensures safe user access to centrally-stored documents from any terminal increasing protection of commercial data
- Central software administration reduces operational costs as software is automatically updated, and users can now also be added effortlessly

Executive Summary

Dimension Data helped Asiana **to centralise the administration** of its desktops.

The virtual solution reduces overall administration costs, simplifies installation and software updates and allows users to safely access their work data at any time and from anywhere.

Client Overview

Asiana is the dominant supplier of comprehensive tourism services in the Czech market. The company's clients include individual clients seeking high-quality tourism, major corporate clients, government as well as leading sportspersons, like the Czech national ice hockey team. The company is based in Prague and serves its clients from seven branches throughout the Czech Republic.

The Asiana travel agency has received a number of prestigious awards and according to the "Deloitte Technology Fast 50 in Central Europe" it is one of the fifty most rapidly developing companies in the Central European area. In 2007 it sold the most SA [Czech Airlines] and Sky team tickets in the entire Czech Republic, thereby confirming its position as the market leader in this field.

Business Challenge

The desktop virtualisation project is a continuation of the previously-implemented server infrastructure virtualisation project. It represents a further stage in the fulfilment of the systematic approach taken by Asiana to increase the effectiveness of information technology operations. The maintenance, software update and installation of desktops are ongoing-intensive activities. They are mainly routine activities which, if underestimated, may lead to unacceptable security risks. The centralisation, automation and safeguarding of these processes brings a number of operational benefits and significantly reduces overall costs for the administration of desktops

The primary aim of Asiana which resulted in the desktop virtualisation project, was to ensure the central distribution of a single version of the MS WinXP operating system to the end station, thereby supporting the problem-free operation of all special user applications. A further driver was to allow users to have easy and secure access at any time and from anywhere to all commercial documents stored at the central server farm.

Solution Provided

The main aim of the project was to provide the following: the option of simple central installation of one version of the operating system to desktops, the option of simple central installation of special user applications and, finally, secure user access to the central commercial document register.

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Petr Tóth, Head of IT, Asiana, S.R.O.

The implementation of products from the VMware View family was preceded by several months of testing and searching for alternative solutions capable of comfortably catering for the full range of requests by Asiana. Following unsatisfactory results from tests on Microsoft Terminal Services, tests of a time-limited version of VMware products were held. This created the outline for a functional solution and marked out the direction in which the end station administration would take in Asiana. Despite partial restrictions, the VMware solution met all the requirements. All the limitations caused by the limited functionality of the freely-available version were sidelined when the decision was made to implement the full commercial VMware View product. A desktop virtualisation solution was developed using the existing VMware infrastructure.

This solution makes use of all the benefits of VMware virtual infrastructure. The main components include high availability cluster, Dynamic Resource Scheduling and the functionality of vMotion.

Consolidated central storage is provided by HP Storage Works EVA 4400, equipped with FC and SATA discs; dual SAN is deployed on Cisco MDS 9124e Fabric Switches.

Back-up is provided by HP DataProtector using VMware Consolidated Backup technology.

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How We Delivered

For the planning and delivery of the project, Dimension Data used their own PRIMER project method.

In the first phase of the project, installation and calibration of the virtual machine template i.e. of the complete terminal, was carried out. This was subsequently used as the base model for the preparation of other identical clones. Due to the unique combination of installed applications this phase was carried out by the staff at Asiana themselves.

The second phase was the actual installation of the products from the VMware View family in the central servers of Asiana and the testing of functionality. The installation was carried out according to a pre-configured installation plan and the actual loading took only three days.

Value Derived

Using the current virtual user station operating model, users can access centrally stored data; the terminals or laptops are purely an imaging interface. Users are not limited by the type of equipment used and, what is more, they remain highly mobile. Any equipment connected to the Internet, in combination with an authentication key to a company's VPN, permits user access to all work-related media, including company data.

The installation and updating of operating systems and applications is carried out centrally, and when new users are added, this is also done automatically on the basis of roles as defined in Microsoft Active Directory. The introduction of VMware View has led to a significant simplification of the desktop administration and software maintenance system.

In conclusion, Petr Tóth comments: “In the past, Dimension Data had already proven itself to be a reliable partner, during the project for the virtualisation of server infrastructure. The success of the desktop virtualisation project has convinced us once again that Dimension Data is a high-quality partner, which is able to professionally cater for the virtualisation of all key areas of the information infrastructure of Asiana.”