

# Stramit Building Products Enhances Application Performance with Infrastructure Refresh

## Stramit Building Products

### industry:

Construction

### country:

Australia

### business challenge:

Replace ageing server and desktop software with new, secure infrastructure that can grow with the organisation.

### solution:

Citrix XenApp, Microsoft Windows Server 2008, HP thin client devices with Microsoft Windows 7, Citrix Branch Repeaters for WAN optimisation, and Citrix Access Gateway for remote access.

### services:

Deployment of a new environment, pilot testing and user training.

### results:

- Eliminated compatibility issues so the company could introduce new, better performing applications
- Enhanced staff productivity by enabling mobile users to gain access to the company's network from any PC with Web connectivity
- Reduced the number of helpdesk calls with more reliable and efficient infrastructure
- Enabled IT staff to deploy new security patches to protect systems in half the time required previously
- Reduced the time taken to provision new desktops by 75 per cent from 2.5 hours to 40 minutes

### Executive Summary

Dimension Data worked with Stramit Building Products to deploy **new server and desktop systems** that improved security and provided remote access to highly mobile staff while **reducing infrastructure running costs.**

### Client Overview

Stramit Building Products is a major Australian manufacturer of roll-formed steel building products, including roof and wall cladding, guttering, fascia, purlins, flooring and structural formwork. These products are delivered through a network of manufacturing and distribution centres that employ 1,100 staff. The company's products are used in urban and regional centres to build homes and sheds as well as commercial buildings.

### Business Challenge

Up until recently, Stramit Building Products' IT infrastructure was based on ageing server hardware running the Microsoft Windows Server 2000 operating system and a mixture of desktops with Microsoft Windows 2000. Microsoft planned to stop issuing security patches for Microsoft Windows Server 2000 in July 2010, which would leave Stramit Building Product's nation-wide network vulnerable to security threats.

The company also grappled with hardware compatibility issues that resulted in high failure rates, and an inability to deploy new applications that would provide a range of new services to end users.

"We wanted to introduce new collaboration tools in the future that

would provide our staff with point-to-point video, instant messaging and presence capabilities," said Des Woolfield, Infrastructure Services Manager, Stramit Building Products.

"This would allow staff to communicate more effectively between our offices and deliver projects faster to our customers. We needed to refresh our IT infrastructure so we could add new, intelligent applications and make it much easier to complete routine management tasks such as applying security and software updates.

"We also wanted to be able to upgrade operating systems and applications for the majority of our users without having to visit each location, and we wanted to reduce the need for file and print servers at most of our branch offices."

### Solution Delivered

In August 2009, Stramit Building Products asked Dimension Data to evaluate options for a desktop infrastructure refresh project. During the discovery phase, Citrix also conducted a proof-of-concept (PoC) to prove that by adding a Citrix Branch Repeater WAN optimisation solution, Stramit could make better use of its available bandwidth to support the upgrade.

After reviewing the results from the discovery phase and PoC, Stramit engaged Dimension Data to replace its PCs and laptops; provide secure remote access capabilities for staff from any device; enable staff at remote locations to view a standard desktop using HP thin clients; and deploy software that makes it easier to manage its PC and laptop fleet.

The company also rolled out new laptops with Microsoft Windows 7, Microsoft Office 2010 and the Citrix Access Gateway

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to provide the company's highly mobile sales representatives, as well as middle and senior managers with remote access. Around 850 users in 26 remote locations log into the network using thin clients.

Dimension Data also helped deploy Citrix Branch Repeaters for WAN optimisation, which have enabled Stramit Building Products to maintain a high level of service to users without having to buy extra bandwidth.

## How We Delivered

Between September 2009 and January 2010, Dimension Data engineers worked closely with Stramit Building Suppliers' IT team to build a business case, and created a detailed document that mapped activities at each stage of the deployment.

Dimension Data worked with Stramit Building Products to design and implement a standard operating system and application environment using virtual servers where appropriate. Engineers also used Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager 2007 R2 to automatically build new Citrix servers and Microsoft Windows 7 environments based on pre-defined templates.

“Dimension Data engineers helped us build templates that enabled us to automatically deploy new, standard PC environments,” said Woolfield. “Dimension Data provided a lot of Microsoft and Citrix expertise and it was very much a collaborative process, which ensured that the implementation met our business requirements.”

In late June 2010, technical teams from Dimension Data and Stramit Building

Products began pilot testing at the company's Newcastle facility. The teams migrated 10 users to the new platforms and identified and fixed teething problems over the following two months.

“We leveraged Dimension Data's relationship with Microsoft and Citrix to ensure the infrastructure was ready to be progressively rolled out across 27 sites by February 2011,” said Woolfield.

“Dimension Data staff worked with us to ensure the rollout went smoothly at each site from a technical and user perspective. They also provided end-user training to ensure our staff were comfortable with the new systems.”

## Value Derived

Stramit Building Products now has an up-to-date, secure IT environment that enables the company to confidently deploy new applications that provide collaborative services, and to easily update existing applications, enhancing security and improving performance.

The new infrastructure has also reduced by 75 per cent the time it takes for the company's IT administrators to provision new desktops for users. Administrators can complete this task in 40 minutes compared to about 2.5 hours previously.

The Citrix Access Gateway has enhanced staff productivity by enabling users to access the company's network from any PC or mobile device with an Internet connection. Staff simply log in using a username and password, which eliminates the need to provision a laptop with a virtual private network (VPN) connection.

“We have also seen a significant reduction in helpdesk calls following the deployment

of new desktop services,” said Woolfield. “Our administrators can also roll out security patches in half the time that it took them previously, and users have the tools that enable them to quickly log on and start working.”

According to Woolfield, the new environment also enables Stramit Building Products to explore new operating models. For instance, users will in the future be able to choose their own laptops thanks to flexible options for application delivery provided by Citrix XenApp.