

Desktop Virtualisation from Kavanagh

Desktop virtualisation can deliver compelling benefits by improving security and manageability, as well as reducing costs, but it can be difficult to ascertain which of the broad range of potential solutions is most suitable for your business? Kavanagh's innovative approach accurately assesses your business and IT environments and determines the right technology to meet your specific needs.



THE CHALLENGES

With personal computing ubiquitous throughout organisations and encompassing an increasingly wide variety of user profiles and locations, the task of managing the software on the multitude of PCs is challenging.

In addition to the workload involved in keeping PCs up to date with the correct software versions and patches, the task of deploying new software normally entails creating new project streams. The ability to keep data safe and control access to these disparate systems also causes problems. Furthermore, the increased deployment of mobile devices only adds to the challenges.

Where PC volumes are large and spread over many locations, it is not unusual for support responsiveness to suffer, with users having to endure delays for the provisioning of new systems, new software and for fault resolution. High support and maintenance costs inevitably follow, as time and effort is spent on visiting user locations.

A further consequence of the proliferation of PCs is the resulting energy consumption and impact on the environment. PCs contain high power chips, hard disks and cooling fans, which generate both noise and heat. Reducing this energy cost and carbon footprint would benefit any organisation.

VIRTUALISATION SOLUTION OPTIONS

Desktop virtualisation is capable of delivering dramatic efficiency gains and cost reductions by running personal applications on centrally located and managed servers. This enables low cost, low management and low power thin client devices to be used. The various desktop virtualisation solutions available, however, differ considerably in the resilience and operational flexibility they offer and the cost of implementation.

The spectrum of desktop virtualisation technologies range from single operating system environments, such as Microsoft Remote Desktop Services and Citrix XenApp, to more complex products typified by VMware View and Citrix XenDesktop, which provide flexible, multi-operating system support.

Powerful management software for the virtualised infrastructure is also available. Products such as Quest Software's vWorkspace provide connection broker and access portal services for greater agility, and the user environment management tools on the market, such as AppSense and RES Software, enhance the end user experience.

The hardware options to be considered include using large servers to run user applications or arrays of blade PCs, which effectively move the desktop hardware to the data centre. Thin client hardware is another area where choice exists as a variety of ergonomically designed static components can be used on the desktop or, alternatively, highly secure mobile thin clients can be deployed.

The virtualisation experts at Kavanagh have a deep understanding of the technologies available. They are skilled at advising where virtualisation is appropriate and identifying the best solution for an organisation. One size does not fit all when optimising the user environment, and a thin client approach might not be appropriate for all users, so a hybrid approach is often recommended.

THE KAVANAGH APPROACH

Kavanagh's extensive experience of providing effective virtualisation solutions has led to the development of the following structured set of services that are designed to ensure well-informed decisions and rapid ROI. Some or all of these services can be used as and when required.

Clients have found that these services deliver substantial benefits by identifying opportunities for consolidation and efficiency improvement, in addition to finding the best desktop virtualisation solution.

Determining decision criteria

This service sets weighting factors that reflect the client's requirements and constraints with regards to the virtualisation solution, such as the degree of change to the infrastructure that would be acceptable or the desired maturity level of the products employed. These metrics will later be used to assist the decision making process and ensure the best fit for the organisation's needs.

Collaborative assessment

The elements of this process include interviews with key IT staff and business representatives, plus the collection of data for capacity planning. A comprehensive report of all findings is produced, which identifies the level of virtualisation that is potentially achievable and where infrastructure consolidation can take place. The required levels of functionality, service availability and disaster recovery are also specified.

Solution workshop

The workshop format is a highly effective technique for combining Kavanagh's experience and technical expertise with the client's knowledge of their business to arrive at the best possible solution. The key inputs to this process are the decision criteria and assessment report produced previously. The deliverables from this activity document the logic applied to the decision-making process and outline the proposed solution together with projected cost savings.

Proof of concept

Piloting the solution with a proof of concept project is an excellent way to mitigate risk by demonstrating the chosen technology and assessing the benefits before making a major investment.

Solution design and implementation

Kavanagh has a long and successful track record of implementing major IT infrastructure projects. Working closely with the client, Kavanagh's technical experts and project managers are skilled at ensuring that essential knowledge is transferred while achieving delivery on time, within budget and with minimal disruption to the business.

A holistic approach

If required, Kavanagh's virtualisation experts will work with you to develop a holistic virtualisation strategy; this will cover not only desktops, but also servers and storage to help maximise the performance and impact of your overall IT resources.

BENEFITS

- ◆ Eliminates desktop visits for support and maintenance
- ◆ A more agile infrastructure with greater potential for consolidation and the ability to leverage new technology in the future

- ◆ Enhanced manageability of the desktop application:
 - ◆ A desktop can be updated once and deployed to many users
 - ◆ Centralised location of all desktop software cuts the IT support and maintenance workload
 - ◆ Reduced complexity through central control of applications
 - ◆ Reduced risk from the use of unlicensed software on desktops
- ◆ Maximised productivity in the user community through:
 - ◆ Increased application reliability and availability
 - ◆ Faster recovery from service or data loss
 - ◆ Better hardware reliability – thin clients have 51% less incidents and generate 72% fewer helpdesk calls
 - ◆ Reduced disruption caused by maintenance activities
- ◆ Enhanced security with all key data stored centrally
- ◆ Reduced network traffic as data no longer has to travel between data centres and desktops
- ◆ Much lower energy costs with savings as high as 85% for power and 60% for cooling
- ◆ Lower capital expenditure with desktop devices costing 75% less and having an operational life of between 5 and 10 years
- ◆ Greatly reduced operating expenses with typical savings of 98% for desktop deployment, 40% for helpdesk support and 90% for maintenance
- ◆ Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for the desktop environment reduced by as much as 40%, with ROI achievable in months rather than years
- ◆ Less office space used up by IT equipment
- ◆ Improved working environment with less noise and heat

(All metrics derived from Kavanagh virtualisation projects)

WHY KAVANAGH?

- ◆ Extensive experience of designing and deploying a wide range of IT infrastructure solutions which maximise ROI
- ◆ Deep understanding of desktop virtualisation techniques and solutions and a completely agnostic attitude to technology
- ◆ Services designed to ensure that technical solutions meet agreed business objectives
- ◆ A collaborative approach to requirements analysis, capacity planning and solution design which builds strong relationships
- ◆ Ability to design, supply, configure, install and support the complete solution, including the hardware, for rapid time to benefit
- ◆ Absolute commitment and a long term approach to partnership
- ◆ A holistic approach to virtualisation – server, storage and desktop

Kavanagh delivers a wide range of innovative IT solutions and services to its enterprise clients and helps organisations gain the maximum value from their IT assets. If you would like to find out more, please email us at kavanagh@kavanagh.co.uk or call us on 01344 409800.

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