Using DaaS to Create the Ideal Desktop User Experience - Without a PC
Meeting User Expectations in the Mobile-Cloud Era

With the ubiquity of end-user computing long established, organizations now are grappling with a tough dilemma: Users want enterprise-class performance and availability, but they demand the flexibility to use familiar devices and applications—anywhere, and at any time. Desktops as a service (DaaS) can be a great way to give users what they want and deliver a superior user experience, leading to greater productivity.

End-user computing has undergone a revolution in recent years, as a proliferation in choices for devices, applications, network access methodologies and usage locations has opened up a world of possibilities. For IT organizations, however, giving users what they want in their clients—performance, breadth of applications, access to corporate services and data, security, fast problem solving and no-hassles onboarding—has been like herding cats.

In particular, users want to use any of an array of client computing devices—desktops, notebooks, tablets or smartphones—and have a positive user experience. In fact, what they really want is for their business computing experience to be every bit as intuitive, flexible and even enjoyable as it is with their favorite consumer devices.

Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) has been a good step in that direction for some organizations. But a number of enterprise IT professionals have discovered that implementing VDI entails certain challenges, such as back-end infrastructure requirements, deployment costs and the lack of sufficient in-house technical skills.

DaaS Empowers End Users and IT

There’s an alternative, however, that delivers the benefits of VDI while also providing a great end-user experience that offers flexibility, access to familiar devices and applications, enterprise-class performance and reliable, secure access: desktops as a service (DaaS).

Desktop user productivity is driven by many factors, but undoubtedly one of the most important in today’s business environment is the ability to work anywhere on any device, as though it was hard-wired to enterprise resources, and maintain or even improve the quality and quantity of the device’s output. DaaS is unique in its ability to give users what they want, when and where they want it. As user expectations become more specific and pronounced, IT organizations are scrambling to come up with new ways to meet those expectations, whether they concern device usage, location independence, access to all available corporate data and applications, or even the ability to customize desktop usage to meet their own preferences.
End Users’ Expectations

IT organizations looking to build the business case for investing in DaaS solutions can point to an enhanced user experience as a key proof point to justify those investments. Among the most important user expectations of their desktop environment are:

• **Device independence.** Users want—no, they demand—the ability to use their familiar and trusted consumer devices, such as tablets, smartphones or personal notebooks—rather than to be tied to corporate mandates on brands and form factors of clients. This is particularly the case with younger, mobile-savvy professionals who treat their devices as essential to how they work and live.

• **Location independence.** Forget about just working at a coffee shop during lunch. Users today expect to work anywhere, at any time—home office, customer site, airports and other locations—when they need access to something in the corporate data center or in the cloud.

• **User self-service.** This is increasingly important because no one wants to wait for an extremely busy and overworked support desk to come to their deskside or even take their physical machine for application access, problem remediation, security patches or other support issues.

• **Uninterrupted sessions.** This “rapid resume” expectation is central to DaaS from a user perspective. Users want to be able to continue working at the same spot they left off during an office session, whether on the train going home or perusing their smartphones while waiting to pick up their kids.

• **Customizable desktop design.** Users have become accustomed to “friendly” desktop designs that reflect their personal tastes and preferences for desktop organization. They expect to have device-aware application look and feel, rather than being forced to have their desktops conform to a desktop operating system appearance.

Desktops as a service offers a compelling value proposition for an organization looking to invest in a new desktop environment that is more flexible, more affordable, easier to manage and faster to deploy—all while meeting users’ new and precise expectations. For IT organizations, DaaS also offers such benefits as improved security (because applications and data are secured in the cloud, not on the end-user device itself), faster onboarding of new users or temporary requirements for desktop access, and improved business continuity because DaaS eliminates the single point of failure that compromised end-user computing based upon physical desktops.

**VMware Horizon Air Desktops and Apps as a Service**

As the long-established market leader in virtualization, VMware is a logical choice for IT organizations looking to enable cloud-based virtual desktops to meet the needs of both their IT organizations and end users.
VMware Horizon® Air™ Desktops and Apps (formerly known as VMware Horizon® DaaS®) enable organizations to meet their users’ expectations because it is designed for flexibility, performance, reliability and security. A key feature is the cloud-based service’s unification of desktop and application access on any device, while also supporting the same fully customized desktop look and feel they’ve grown used to on their personal mobile devices.

Horizon Air Desktops and Apps enhance user satisfaction and productivity by allowing users to stop work at any time on their current devices without turning off their cloud-hosted desktops. Users can then log back into their virtual desktop or application from another location on whatever device they prefer to use.

Deploying Horizon Air Desktops and Apps is simple enough to put minimal burden on IT staffs, allowing users to get up and running quickly and contributing to a positive user experience. Setting up virtual desktops takes only a few clicks, lessening the administrative burden for IT departments and making onboarding of new users a hassle-free experience.

Each user can have their own virtual desktop, customized as they prefer by application or look and feel, in order to re-create the familiar user experience associated with their consumer devices. Users also can run their most demanding workloads on their DaaS-enabled device, enabling further flexibility to use those devices away from the office at any time.

Conclusion

The very nature of client computing has changed in stark and important ways, driven in large part by new and important user expectations of how, when and where they will access enterprise applications, data and services. Users do not want to be encumbered by corporate standards on which PC to use—or whether to use a PC at all—nor do they want IT-placed limits on their ability to use technology for business benefit.

Of course, this represents significant challenges for IT organizations that must balance users’ expectations with the harsh realities of budgets, staff expertise, security concerns and corporate governance policies. As a result, more and more IT organizations are turning to virtual desktops—specifically, cloud-based desktops as a service—in order to meet users’ expectations while managing costs, complexity and functionality.

Horizon Air Desktops and Apps help IT departments in nearly all-sized organizations to simplify the delivery of cloud-hosted virtual desktops and apps to end users at a predictable cost. The service enables IT to save time and money, without sacrificing enterprise requirements for security and control. End users can be much more productive, with a complete workspace they can access from any device, anywhere.

IT decision makers looking to build a strong business case for investing in DaaS solutions that create a superior user experience and drive higher productivity should consider VMware Horizon Air Desktops and Apps. It delivers a powerful combination of user customization, easy deployment, affordability and reliable, secure operation that is consistent with the industry-wide movement away from expensive, rigid physical desktops in favor of virtual desktops.

For Additional Information

For more information about Horizon Air Desktops and Apps, visit www.vmware.com/products/daas/.