



Virtual Desktop Solutions for Business Process Outsourcing

The Challenge of Outsourcing Business Processes

Transferring business processes to an outside provider to achieve cost reductions and improved service quality, also known as business process outsourcing (BPO), is a rapidly growing trend. Finance, accounting, IT administration, call center and offshore application development processes are increasingly being moved overseas or transferred to outside providers to improve the bottom line and increase service levels.

IT departments responsible for outsourcing business processing are being asked to fully support processes being outsourced and respond faster with limited budgets while still maintaining the highest security standards.

To work effectively, an outsourcing provider must have equivalent access to a company's desktop environment. All applications, including custom or legacy applications, need to be tested and working at the outsourcing facility – not an easy task if the applications need to run on a different IT infrastructure.

Simultaneously, the IT organization needs to establish the same level of security for the outsourcing provider that it maintains on the corporate network. Sending corporate desktop assets outside the protection of the corporate infrastructure (and in many cases outside of the country) can have severe repercussions if customer data or company IP is compromised.

Desktop Virtualization

The challenge of providing third-party BPO vendors full network access while maintaining security is being met by a new class of secure virtualization solutions—VMware virtual desktop technology.

99 out of the Fortune 100 companies use VMware virtualization technology to power their data centers, safeguard against disasters, improve development life cycles and more efficiently manage desktop environments. VMware's desktop virtualization leverages this robust virtualization technology to meet the unique demands of outsourcing business processes.

Virtualizing BPO and Outsourced Operations

Instead of maintaining entire PCs in the field with their own operating system, applications and configurations, "virtualized" PCs can be maintained in the corporate IT data center where individual user desktops can be more easily supported and securely managed. End users can access their virtual desktop PCs from anywhere, from any system with Internet access.

Many VMware customers have already extended their virtualization initiatives to include desktops. Collier County Public Schools, the 127th Largest School District in the U.S, has 3,000 VMware virtual desktops and growing, all hosted in a central location for student and faculty access to their desktops anywhere on campus. And many other enterprise customers are using VMware for their call centers, offshore developers, and other BPO practices. IntelliRisk Management Corporation (IRMC) performs collections and account receivables services for major financial institutions in the U.S. IRMC is using VMware virtual desktop solutions to provide access to several hundred users in their call center.

You can experience these benefits when you maintain virtual desktop environments in a central location for your BPO, outsourced and offshore practices:

- Seamlessly integrate with thin client technologies to control costs
- Better control outsourced desktop environments
- Improve service levels and IT responsiveness

Seamlessly Integrate with Thin Client Technologies to Control Costs

Why give transaction and offshore workers fully configured PCs that can be expensive to manage and can break down easily when you can give them just enough "computer" to support the task at hand? With desktops all housed in a central location, the virtual desktops are less costly to set up, update and manage, especially as users come and go. There's no need to send your IT personnel out on location to fix a problem with a remote PC.

"Desktop virtualization offers significant benefits, including better security, manageability, and access to desktop applications in a distributed world."

*Forrester, Desktop Virtualization is the Future of the Corporate PC
January 5, 2006*

You can consider replacing traditional PCs in remote locations with a single thin client, repurposed PC or less costly desktop hardware. Organizations like IntelliRisk Management Corporation are using VMware virtual desktop solutions to reduce costs by replacing traditional PCs with thin clients. Thin clients are solid state devices that are built to last and have no "moving parts" such as CD/DVD, hard drives, or fans – the most common components of a PC that break down and increase service costs.

Another IT cost that is often overlooked when businesses outsource their business processes is the difficulty of application integration. Most businesses have custom or legacy applications that are critical to the business but not easily integrated into other IT environments. Businesses can incur unforeseen costs and delays trying to get these applications working with server-based computing technologies. With VMware virtual desktop solutions, BPO vendors simply access desktops over a remote connection. There's no change to the applications running in a virtual environment.

Better Control over Desktop Environments

VMware desktop virtualization solutions enable you to better protect intellectual property in the case of offshore developers or confidential customer information accessed by call center agents. Complete desktop environments, including the operating system, applications, data and configurations, run on virtual machines controlled in your data center -- not on machines you don't own or laptops that can be stolen.

VMware desktop virtualization technology goes a step further, letting you fully isolate each user's virtual desktop from another virtual desktop. You reduce risk of exposing sensitive data when outsourcing vendors use the same workers or the same systems to service competitive clients. With centralized security, you can also shut off network access for an employee who has left the facility with the click of a button.

Improve Service Levels and IT Responsiveness

Many organizations are using VMware desktop virtualization technology to respond more quickly to business demands. IntelliRisk Management Corporation can get a new desktop user in a call center up and running in less than 10 minutes. And many call center and remote practices can consider reducing the overall number of desktop environments they manage, thereby reducing the complexity and support burden. A small number of hosted virtual desktops can be shared among call center workers who are doing similar tasks.

You'll also see a change in service levels from BPO processes that run on virtualization technology. VMware Infrastructure makes it possible to eliminate planned downtime for upgrades and patches because desktops all run on server hardware that can be moved instantly from one server to the other without interruption in service for the desktop end user. Further, each hosted virtual desktop user is also completely isolated from another user. If one user's machine goes down, the other users accessing their desktops remotely won't be affected.

IT can dynamically control desktop resources when they are hosted in a data center, growing and contracting resources for the business without making additional investments. In the case of call centers where seasonal demands may require adding or reducing desktop users, VMware offers features to help IT monitor usage as well as reallocate or reprioritize the resources needed for your desktop populations.

VMware for BPO Outsourced Practices

VMware virtualization solutions are enabling companies to transform their IT functions into flexible, agile business assets that are more competitive in today's global economy. VMware virtual desktop technology takes IT functions a step further by extending the reach of your corporate desktops to your BPO or other business partners whenever or wherever they are needed.

VMware offers professional services as well as a number of desktop solutions partners who can provide out-of-the-box virtual desktop implementations for offshore or BPO practices.

To learn more about VMware and our virtual desktop solutions, visit us on the Web at <http://www.vmware.com/vdi> or contact sales@vmware.com.

"Virtualization is the most important technology to hit the corporate PC space since the thin client."

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