Vitrociset was formed in 1992 by the merger of CISET, which had been active in air traffic control systems and space systems since the 1970s, and Vitroselenia, which operated primarily in defense logistics. As a result, the company is famed for its expertise in these three mission-critical sectors, with an offer targeted at a range of competitive markets – from defense to security, from logistics to transport, from space to smart cities. This Italian company today employs over 700 people, with output value of €186 million in 2012. It designs, manufactures and manages complex, safe and mission-critical systems, guaranteeing the highest standards of quality, safety and reliability.

Massimo Salati, Vitrociset's ICT manager, heads up a group of eight professionals who manage a distributed networking structure across five sites in Italy (Rome, Cagliari, Naples, Milan, Venice-Marghera), and eight overseas (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, French Guiana, Indonesia and Turkey).

"We produce complex systems to make life easier for people and Information Technology has always been a key component of our business", says Salati. "Vitrociset has an in-house data center that is also utilized to provide hosting solutions to clients. This data center hosts a diverse mix of technologies to provide processing resources for a range of business activities, including UNIX, Linux and Windows systems. Our aim is thus to streamline and optimize the data center, because it is central to our business and continues to be a resource for the company and for our customers". At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, Vitrociset undertook an initial project to consolidate and virtualize its systems. "The project involved virtualization on the VMware vSphere platform of around 300 server systems hosted in the data center at Via Tiburtina in Rome" continues Salati. "Our aim was to cut running costs by working with fewer machines and the results were considerable, if we consider that the number of servers was reduced fifteen-fold".

The success of the first virtualization project led Vitrociset to roll out this technology to client systems, with an initial project based on non-VMware technology, which the company had already licensed, so no investment in

virtualization software was actually required. The results of this second client virtualization project did not live up to expectations. Angelo Saverio Quattrone and Fabio Passerini, who are specifically tasked with client management on a daily basis, explain. "We had made reasonable progress in terms of consolidation, but things changed from a systems point of view, because managing a virtual machine with that technology is not very different from managing a physical PC, with all the limitations that involves", explains Quattrone.

In the virtualization process undertaken by Vitrociset, remote machine management became crucial; something which led the company's IT department to adopt VMware technology for desktop management. Vitrociset is gradually replacing old PCs with thin client devices and is undertaking a project to deploy VMware Horizon Suite for desktop management. There is a marked difference from the previous implementation, especially when it comes to reliability. "The current level of reliability is markedly higher", says Fabio Passerini. "We can do much more in terms of performance and bandwidth use, using the same hardware and physical resources, than we could with the previous technology". "VMware Horizon Suite gives us more performance and much greater availability

"Today we manage around 300 devices at our Rome site using VMware Horizon Suite, but we expect to increase this to a total of some 600 devices. This means that we can work effectively with users' hardware resources, making available the portfolio of applications they use every day. All the while working more efficiently and making considerable savings".

Massimo Salati, ICT Manager of Vitrociset

compared with the previous technology", adds Quattrone. "With VMware we can virtualize applications and the level of accessibility to the system available to us is much higher than before. VMware Horizon Suite connects end users to applications on any device without having to sacrifice control and IT safety, functionality that we didn't have before." The desktop virtualization project undertaken by Massimo Salati's team using VMware Horizon Suite also differs in terms of completion times, much to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. After the Rome site, with desktop and mobile users, virtualization was rolled out to other Vitrociset sites in Campania and Sardinia. "Today we manage around 300 devices at the Rome site with VMware Horizon Suite, but we expect to increase that to 600 workstations soon", concludes Salati. "This means that we can work effectively with users' hardware resources, making available the portfolio of applications they use every day. All the while being more productive and making considerable savings". As for the future, Vitrociset plans to roll out the client virtualization platform to other sites, introducing a virtual workspace for employees, including both the catalogue of applications and user data.

Results and benefits

- Ability to manage client devices remotely, both in terms of applications and systems

- Markedly improved performance compared with the previous desktop virtualization technology

- More efficient and productive IT staff, which saves money and makes it possible to focus on higher-value activities

- Convenient implementation completion times

- Simple business compliance implementation

- High level of mobility for users

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