



VertretungsNetz Mobilizes Mission-Critical Support with VMware Workspace ONE

VertretungsNetz protects the fundamental rights of people with mental illness and intellectual disability. Headquartered in Vienna, the organization is a nonprofit charitable organization. Since 1980, VertretungsNetz has grown to include nearly 750 volunteers and 750 full-time employees and serves clients through 84 offices across Austria.

Industry

Nonprofit

Strategic priorities

- Anywhere Workspace

Partner

ACP X-tech provides IT solutions to help innovative organizations realize their aspirations and business goals. Founded in 1993, ACP X-tech employs more than 2,000 people in 50 offices across Germany and Austria.

VMware footprint

- VMware® Workspace ONE®

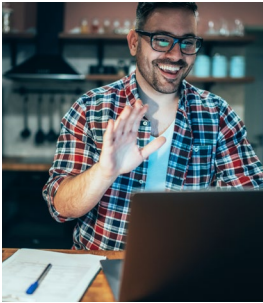
In all three of its departments—adult representation, patient advocacy and resident representation—VertretungsNetz delivers onsite support to clients, residents and patients, with employees using mobile devices—smartphones and notebooks—to work with sensitive client data. VertretungsNetz adopted a unified endpoint management system from VMware to manage mobile devices for its 1,500 workers from a single console. Simplified IT processes enable staff to save valuable time they now devote to their primary mission, providing necessary support to all their clients, residents and patients.

Technical challenges waste valuable time, hinder client support

People with intellectual disabilities or those who suffer from mental illness are sometimes involuntarily committed to psychiatric facilities or have their freedom restricted in care homes or hospitals. The central mission of VertretungsNetz is to advocate for and protect these vulnerable people across Austria with professionalism and sensitivity. To ensure clients receive the support they need, and to provide advice and training to relatives and other stakeholders, VertretungsNetz staff must work where their clients are located. This dispersed work environment demands the use and deployment of mobile devices. For VertretungsNetz volunteers and staff, the rarest commodity is time—time to understand each individual case—time to advise and support their clients. Dealing with technical issues draws precious resources away from their most important work, serving clients.

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Ralf Heller, Head of IT, VertretungsNetz



Mobile device management brings support to the client

VertretungsNetz needed to find a solution to keep its staff and volunteers mobile while providing superior technical support. Working in concert with longstanding partner ACP X-tech, the organization evaluated a series of providers and solutions. VertretungsNetz and ACP X-tech had already collaborated closely on central IT infrastructure solutions in the past, successfully completing several projects together, so making the decision to follow their advice was a logical extension of their ongoing work.

For employees of the department of adult representation, using smartphones yielded a significant reduction in their workload and became essential for many working in the field. Relevant information about clients, such as synchronized, related contact and appointment information from central on-premises systems were accessible via smartphone as well.

Unified endpoint management integrates a sprawling organization

VertretungsNetz has equipped its staff with a network of new mobile devices. Following the rollout of Android smartphones to adult representatives and executives in 2021, the replacement of all thin clients with Windows 11 notebooks continues into 2022. The ability to provide different types of devices with different operating systems and usage policies was a key criterion in the selection of a provider for an MDM solution. While many vendors offer solutions for location-independent device management, they seldom offer equivalent configuration options across all operating systems.

For this reason, VertretungsNetz chose VMware Workspace ONE, a unified endpoint management solution that enables any number of devices to be managed across their entire lifecycle from a single management console, exactly the solution VertretungsNetz needed. The platform automates routine IT activities, such as maintenance and the installation of updates, benefits that yield a significant increase in efficiency for employees. The solution relieves staff from involvement in solving IT tasks or problems, freeing them to devote their time fully to their primary work.

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In the past, when staff used notebooks to carry out their work remotely, IT issues demanded a great investment of time and energy toward maintenance and management. “With recurring configuration or software problems, mobile work with notebooks for our employees was available only to a limited extent,” says Ralf Heller, IT manager at VertretungsNetz. “For example, if an error occurred when using an online communication tool, employees had to go to their location, connect the device to the network, reboot, and then hope the update was already available or that a solution could be found by contacting the IT help desk in an online session. For those affected, this was a demanding, wasteful effort.”

Another obstacle that slowed the organization’s ability to work remotely came with the COVID-19 pandemic. The obligation to work from home made it difficult for employees to visit their offices for required updates. VertretungsNetz recognized the urgent necessity to develop a solution that would enable the organization to manage all mobile devices regardless of the employee’s or volunteer’s work location.



“The VMware Workspace ONE solution brings significant benefits to the provision and design of employees’ IT work. As central IT, we are now able to react quickly and in a targeted manner to the respective events, with significantly less personal effort by affected employees,” Heller says. “Bearing in mind that our workspaces are spread over eight federal states in Austria and our three departments are focused on different fields of activity, we will always have varying demands.” The solution was implemented in less than four months in early 2021. A year later, VertretungsNetz has around 450 VMware Workspace ONE Advanced licenses, with the ongoing expansion to replace stationary thin client workstations with notebooks for full-time employees.

Device management sharpens mission-critical focus

Once VMware Workspace ONE was installed, VertretungsNetz was able to take a further step toward greater professionalism and better support for IT requirements. The VMware solution helps the organization meet its specific requirements. As Heller says, “We know exactly what we expect of device management. An MDM solution for different devices, and especially the flexible connections to our on-premises environments, was a unique selling point of VMware technology. At the same time, the VMware solution offers the necessary policies to protect our data with full legal compliance, as well as giving our team a reliable infrastructure to work with.”

Time savings in practice is another advantage. The services provided by the employees of VertretungsNetz are complex, varied and time-consuming. In the adult representation department, staff are often called on to represent clients when signing contracts or handling bank transactions. Employees are therefore in close contact with authorities and public agencies. In the patient advocacy department, staff work on location with psychiatric institutions to ensure the necessary legal protections for patients.

Again, these activities consume a great deal of time and demand the individual’s full attention. Appointments for resolving IT problems are only an unnecessarily high expenditure of time. Fortunately, VMware Workspace ONE now provides relief, enabling staff to make better use of their time and avoid unwanted distractions. In other words, the network’s investment in this modern solution is helping to further improve and expand the services it provides in three areas.

A foundation for greater efficiency, with work still to be done

With the first project and rollout complete, the benefits of using VMware Workspace ONE were immediately apparent. For VertretungsNetz, the next step will be to increase the number of licenses and convert existing device licenses into user licenses. The organization plans to meet its mission-critical work by enabling a fully mobile workforce supported by a modern technology platform built on VMware solutions

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