Case Study:
Chaitons LLP

A mid-size law firm replaces its outdated infrastructure to improve system performance and productivity

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Chaitons LLP

Chaitons LLP, a Toronto-based law firm with 80+ staff members, prides itself on providing "large-firm expertise and resources with a small-firm attitude." In practice for over 30 years, its specialties include financial services, commercial real estate, corporate law, and insolvency and restructuring.

CHALLENGE

Providing staff with faster, more reliable access to corporate resources

Keeping resources and files secure is a high priority in any law firm. Since 2009, the IT team at Chaitons maintained security for the firm's resources by relying on hosted shared desktops. However, as their legacy remote desktop solution aged, it grew less and less reliable. Every day it required the team's intervention for any number of issues, including stuck sessions, application-hang, system resets, and server reboots. As a result, staff grew increasingly frustrated with it.

After hours, lawyers were particularly vexed by the growing problems. According to Dom Chung, Director of IT, some would check in with the IT team on Friday before leaving the office. "If lawyers were planning on a busy working weekend, they'd come to us and ask: 'Will the system be ok? Because I need to do a lot of work this weekend.' And the unspoken request was that the IT team needed to be available in case there were issues."

Not only was the remote desktop solution unreliable, but it also required significant IT time to manage it. Different departments need to use different applications, but the hosted shared environment – everyone got the same desktop – meant that restricted applications could not be deployed easily. To provide access to the right apps for each user, Chaiton's assigned highly specific user profiles, and installed apps on different servers. Moreover, to get some apps to work in a virtualized environment, they had to be installed on a Windows 2012 server. This created incompatibilities, because many of those apps were designed for installation on Windows 7.

Over the years, BYOD requirements increasingly affected IT team productivity negatively. During the workday, staff members used PCs running on Microsoft, but after hours they primarily used Apple OS devices. Every time they got a new device, they brought it to IT to help them connect it to the MDM solution. With one-third of staff members working remotely, this was a frequent occurrence. Additionally, BYOD introduced security issues–IT could not easily track nor revoke control of remote desktop apps on specific devices without resetting a user's password or wiping it altogether.

SOLUTION

40% per user, per device cost savings

Scale Computing's hyper converged infrastructure speeds performance

In the third quarter of 2015 Chaitons' IT team began working on fixing performance issues as it looked to upgrade its data center. At the time, their infrastructure consisted of six servers, load balancers, gateway, and application servers. And it featured five points of contact – to manage the SAN, fiber connect, VMWare, server hardware, and networking components.

After some research, the IT team discovered Scale Computing's hyper-converged infrastructure. The team learned that it could consolidate their data center into three 1U units, which provided a single point of support. Thanks to eliminating the maintenance support for the 56U of server equipment and dramatically reducing the cost of server virtualization, Chaitons achieved an 18-month ROI on the Scale solution. Plus, it saved on electrical costs and gained six hours of extra backup battery power.

"Because Workspot offers everything built-in at simplified pricing, we're saving 40% of what we were spending per user, per device. The cost savings alone make Workspot a no-brainer."

Workspot improves productivity and security with remote desktop control

The next issue to tackle was problems with the remote desktop solution, which was seven years old at the beginning of 2016. When Scale's sales representative heard that Chaitons was looking to either upgrade or replace its current solution, he suggested Workspot. After doing some research, Chaitons IT team decided to conduct a trial. "The three key points that stuck in our minds about Workspot were single sign-on, a 60-minute deployment, and no server required. This all meant we could free up valuable IT resources and make users happy too," said Chung.

During the trial the IT team learned that Workspot enables many end user computing scenarios, including dedicated virtual desktops, hosted shared desktops, and the ability for a user to remotely access their physical PC back at the office. Initially, they planned to implement hosted-shared desktops, but for many years their users had been requesting remote access to their physical desktop PCs. With Workspot, they could easily deliver the most appropriate computing experience for every user, and they were able to allow access to particular applications based on the user's role in the firm, rather than sharing all applications with everyone – what their legacy solution had forced them to do.

Workspot delivered the team's "dream scenario" for BYOD

"I have been very lucky to have struck gold by overseeing two major IT overhauls in my relatively short tenure at Chaitons: Scale Computing and Workspot are both nothing short of technical feats of wonder."

"From the sales executive, to the engineer, to the support team–everyone I've dealt with at Workspot has been extremely knowledgeable. It has been an absolute pleasure working with them. I foresee a very long partnership in the making."

This was, hands down, the functionality that sold them on Workspot. According to Chung: "At first, we thought we'd use Workspot to run virtual desktops that users would share. But then we discovered that we could actually control users' desktops. This meant we could install apps on desktops where needed, and control access to these apps where needed. Plus, for years, our remote users had been asking us to provide them with the same experience inside and outside of the office. Within a few minutes of deploying Workspot, we were able to deliver that dream scenario for them. It made us heroes."

Chaitons' IT staff conducted Workspot staff training by walking around the office and visiting staff members' desks. They told them where to download the Workspot app, how to login with the right credentials, verify their single sign-on by email and set up a password. "Training is a breeze. Once staff members are on Workspot, they're on. We never hear from them again," said Chung.

Deploying Workspot on BYOD devices was as simple as telling users where to download the Workspot app. It also significantly improved security. "Workspot's BYOD capabilities are a godsend," said Chung. "My IT team doesn't need to manage users' various devices to maintain a high level of security. Workspot provides a secure container that enables users to pull down apps and data and interact with it in a browser-based experience. If the device is lost, all we have to do is remotely wipe the Workspot client. There's no residue left behind."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Videos: www.workspot.com/resources

Solution brief: Workspot DaaS 2.0: Insanely Simple Desktop as a Service on Microsoft Azure

Blog: blog.workspot.com

ABOUT WORKSPOT

Workspot has reinvented Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) with its cloud-native VDI 2.0 and Desktop-as-a-Service 2.0 (DaaS 2.0) solutions. Workspot solves the corporate challenge of securely delivering apps, desktops and data to any device and helps organizations achieve unprecedented time-to-value for VDI implementations. With a focus on customer satisfaction, Workspot offers the shortest implementation times in the industry. The Cupertino, Calif.-based company received the Best of VMworld 2016 Gold Award for Desktop and Application Delivery solutions. For more information on Workspot's risk-free, turnkey solutions, visit: www.workspot.com.

Workspot