Shaping the future of end user services

The technology refresh opportunity

Ian Bradbury, Associate Director at Fujitsu, and Dave Pritchard, technologist and Business Development Director at Fujitsu, discuss a fresh approach to addressing the technology refresh challenge.

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There's no doubt about it, your next technology refresh is going to cost.

» What if that money could fund a transformation in the way you manage your desktops, one that helps you to manage an ever-increasing set of demands, deliver true workforce agility – and generate sustainable return on investment? «

Source: Ovum, Enterprise virtual desktop alternatives, 2009

Refreshing thinking

Could your next major desktop refresh be your last?

The idea isn't as far-fetched as it sounds. Organisations today are rapidly moving towards 'as a service' type models for more and more aspects of their infrastructure. These models are attractive because they need no capital expenditure upfront, and offer pay-as-you-go structures delivered via secure and reliable cloud-based services. This means that technology refreshes are no longer about replacing old kit with faster and slicker machines – but about creating agile, on-demand platforms that ensures your business is ready for change.

In the end user space, the timing couldn't really be any better…

The Windows 7 imperative

While Microsoft XP is still the predominant operating system being used by business enterprises today, support is due to end in April 2014. Many organisations have not upgraded their desktop operating systems since 2003/2004 and are running XP rather than Vista[1], therefore having to move straight to Windows 7. This means a huge number of operating system refreshes are on the way.

The lingering effects of recession

The recent global economic crisis saw a large number of organisations delaying investments, cancelling IT projects and extending the life of their existing assets. A large number of PC systems in the enterprise world are now out of warranty, and costing companies more to maintain than to replace with new models. The result? Some leading analysts estimate that there are more than 70 million out of date commercial PCs in EMEA alone – all of which will need to be refreshed at some point soon.

Over the next few pages we aim to show how this headache can be turned into an opportunity. More than that, we will demonstrate how an alternative and progressive approach to desktop services could not only eliminate the need for future wholesale changes, but make organisations more flexible and responsive than ever.

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[1] Roy Illsley Senior Analyst, Ovum. In "The Benefits of Virtualised Desktops", Martin Courtney, Computing, 08 Jun 2010

Approaching your refresh
– other factors to consider

Beyond the immediate need for the refresh itself, there are wider cultural and business issues to take into account that make the argument for a new approach even more compelling. Technology refreshes of all kinds need to be considered in light of the drive towards a new, vibrant approach to flexibility in the work place. What's more, these rapidly evolving changes in today's corporate environment mean that IT departments are facing more challenges in end user management than ever before.

- Individuals are becoming much more technology savvy as they experience increasingly powerful technology in the home – and are demanding a similar experience in the work environment
- 'Generation Y' (those people born after 1980, and before 1994) is also starting to enter the workforce in larger volumes – with much greater understanding and expectations of IT
- There are many more end user devices beyond the traditional PC that IT departments are being asked to support – including smartphones and iPads
- Today, there are more mobile and flexible working staff for the IT department to support – making it more difficult to ensure data protection compliance

- People are blurring the boundaries of the working day as they juggle their home, work and social lives – and want the ability to access their data anywhere and at anytime
- Users are also demanding collaboration tools that reflect social media systems – and expect to be able to access their applications and data from the internet anytime
- On top of this, organisations are increasingly looking at how they can be more agile and reduce property costs through flexible working and flexible resourcing models

The old approach to refresh will fail to meet these challenges

In the recent past, IT departments have looked to manage these issues by reducing complexity through the standardisation of hardware and software. This helped reduce costs in managing physical PCs, while also cutting labour costs when deploying new operating systems and applications.

We think the time is right to look at how well the old "one-size-fits-all" approach meets both the long-term needs of the users, and the flexibility that organisations need going forward. For many, the answer will be that they can no longer concentrate on standardising their hardware and software – but must also think about standardising the policies and processes that support new ways of working.

IT departments need to look for new ways of managing and supporting the increasing diversity they are faced with, while still managing the associated costs.

Time to think differently?

With such a new a diverse set of challenges to face, organisations now need to fully evaluate 'virtual' and cloud-based 'as a service' approaches to end user services if they are to adapt. With this new vision of the desktop, technology refreshes can be dramatically simplified by hosting problematic legacy applications remotely in isolated environments, while still using them within modern operating systems and application suites that include Windows 7 and Office 2010.

Importantly, both these models also have multiple benefits that clearly meet the wider business needs and issues of today.

- **Desktop Virtualisation** – not only helps IT departments to cope with new flexible working models, but also has the capacity to improve security and compliance by enforcing the use of centralised data stores for managing business data – so reducing the risk of losing data stored on thick clients. This approach can also reduce costs in many ways, in particular through application virtualisation. Provisioning becomes much simpler – because new desktops can be 'spun up' in seconds, rather than the days (or sometimes even weeks) experienced under traditional provisioning models. Desktop Virtualisation also has the capacity to improve security and compliance by enforcing the use of centralised data stores for managing business data – so reducing the risk of losing data stored on thick clients, and making it much easier to manage mergers or divestments.

- **Cloud-based 'as a Service'** – enables organisations to achieve even lower cost of ownership for desktop services and application delivery, while at the same time improving performance and delivery in critical business environments. Fujitsu builds the necessary infrastructure and then charges the client for using it on a pay-as-you-go basis. CFOs benefit because fixed costs are converted into fully flexible costs that closely track business demand. And CIOs welcome the peace of mind that comes from using proven IT infrastructure pools, designed and installed in secure data centres, which also have the resilience and performance levels their systems need.

The overall result of these models is that organisations can deliver desktop services with both greater flexibility and cost savings – and without ever needing to think about the time or complications involved in managing major OS or hardware upgrades themselves. They move costs away from upfront capital expenditure, pay only for what they use – and give their users access to the very latest software to enhance the way they work.

However, while these benefits are compelling and instantly attractive to most businesses, it's also important to remember that there is no single, one-size-fits-all solution. Finding the right blend of services involves careful consideration of both the needs of your users and of your business. There are decisions about which users need which type of service and options about how to exploit the cloud – whether it be via a private cloud (on premises or off premises) serving just your organisation, a community cloud shared among like-minded organisations, a public cloud service - or a hybrid based on a combination these different approaches.

Your next step
is an important one…

> »Many are considering either the traditional upgrade path to physical desktops, or using desktop virtualisation to give them an opportunity to develop their systems in a completely different way which provides more flexibility for end users and the readiness to make more use of cloud computing if and when they need it.«

Roy Illsley Senior Analyst, Ovum

Many organisations now need to make choices about how they are going to tackle technology refresh issues. Even in the unlikely event that they will not be affected by the impending removal of support for XP – Gartner estimates that more than 95 per cent of enterprise PCs run a version of Windows OS[2] – IT departments will still need to think hard about how their next investment will be returned in the face of a flexible, more fluid future.

At Fujitsu, we believe organisations can follow one of three paths:

- They can take the traditional hardware technology refresh route, upgrading all the machines in a like-for-like swap with a new operating system – and hope to make productivity improvements from faster more efficient machines and an improved OS. This approach however, will not fundamentally change the way IT provision is delivered, but organisations taking this path can look at how they can make improvements in the way they manage the desktop environment – such as considering centralisation and remote access tools to reduce costs, improving power management and speeding up deployments of new machines and applications.

- They could move towards a brave new world of desktop 'as a service', utilising virtualisation technology to separate out the operating system, data and applications from the physical device and utilising a cloud-based provision on a cost-per-seat model. This approach fundamentally underpins the concept of 'anytime, anywhere, any place' computing with the capability to utilise any device – even users' personal devices (such as iPads).

- Or, move to something in-between, which will be more suitable for organisations that are not yet ready for a fully virtualised approach or 'as a service' model, but acknowledge there is a need to be moving in this direction and have a mature enough infrastructure and management policy to start the journey. This may include taking existing PCs and locking them down as 'kiosk' type devices, or delivering virtualised applications that are decoupled from local hardware and delivered from the centralised servers, but with the operating system still residing on the local hardware.

Whichever path an organisation chooses, it is vital that they also choose the right partner to help them make their next technology refresh a success, and potentially, their last.

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[2] Gartner: Forecast Analysis: PC Market by Operating System, Worldwide, April 2010 Update

The Fujitsu approach

At Fujitsu, we understand the adoption issues around desktop virtualisation just as well as we do the end-to-end requirements for traditional 'classic' end user services. We have taken a journey to the new world of 'as a service' models, and acknowledge that they could truly transform the way that organisations think about desktop services in the future.

However, we understand that many organisations have evaluated Desktop Virtualisation but have largely found it only applicable to a small proportion of their end users. Our solution has been proven to deliver a much wider and faster adoption – an approach that is able to transform the whole estate in a way that is scalable and really drives business value.

The key is to recognise that 'one size does not fit all' and that exploiting any combination of these approaches should be considered as part of a broader solution to delivering a cost-effective, higher quality and more agile service. A balance must be struck between the business demands for control, and users' demands for flexibility. That's why our approach – based on our extensive experience in delivering tailored desktop services – meets both the needs of individual organisations, and their people.

- **Assessment** – our process begins with a comprehensive and knowledgeable assessment of your organisation's technology, applications and user environments. We also use a comprehensive ROI model – developed through real experiences in client engagements – to identify both long-term and 'quick win' cost savings.
- **Profiling** – the assessment data we capture is then used to create a set of user role mappings across the organisation, where application types as well as data and service access needs are mapped. The result is a set of build models which we use to create common, standardised technology roles that reduce operational cost, and provide commonality across many users.
- **User engagement** – we recognise the human side of any implementation, and use the profile data to provide a positive user experience through relevant user training and support.
- **Planning** – Fujitsu then creates comprehensive, informed delivery plans that enable us to realise cost savings in a short time frame – and at minimal risk to your organisation.

Fujitsu and the desktop

Fujitsu is responsible for managing approximately 5 million desktop devices globally, including 2.9m across Europe – and is the number one desktop service supplier to the UK Government.

We are also a leading global Systems Integrator for desktop virtualisation projects, delivering some of the largest and most complex desktop transformations.

All of these projects are driven by a clear business case for delivering business agility, supported by the requirement to reduce the costs of managing the end user environment. Overall, our services save a typical customer up to 30% of their service costs. With the latest innovations around cloud-based 'as a service', we expect organisations to save up to 40%.

Customers can also rest assured that the Fujitsu portfolio is capable of handling any kind of end user service and includes every aspect of the desktop lifecycle – from procuring and managing thick and thin clients, delivering hosted applications and virtual desktops, providing managed print services, desk-side support and Service Desk services, to the responsible disposal or redeployment of technology at end-of-life.

For more information about this offering please contact

Ask Fujitsu

0870 242 7998
askfujitsu@uk.fujitsu.com

uk.fujitsu.com

REF: 3338