

“We can seamlessly give users what they keep asking for. The critical point is that we don't need an engineer to visit their machine – the user can self-select to upgrade when it suits and the virtual environment takes care of the rest.”

Steve Wood
Head of Workplace Technology
RBS



Fujitsu and RBS deployed a virtual client service that enables flexible working from any device while new services can be delivered instantly and security issues can be resolved quickly.

At a glance

Country: United Kingdom
Industry: Financial Services
Founded: 1727
Employees: 92,000+
Website: www.rbs.com

Challenge

RBS wanted to extend its virtual desktop environment from 20,000 users to 90,000 as part of a workplace enablement initiative. The objective was to free more users to work flexibly from any device, thus reducing the company's physical footprint and increasing productivity.

Solution

The company worked with its technology partner, Fujitsu, to extend the existing virtual client services platform, based on FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY and Microsoft HyperV. Now, 70,000 users have used a self-service portal to automatically upgrade their devices to the new environment.

Benefit

- Employees can work flexibly from any device, making them happier and more productive
- New services can be delivered in hours rather than months, making RBS more responsive to its customers' needs
- Security issues can be addressed more quickly within the central virtual environment
- Millions of pounds' worth of property has been freed up, removing cost from the business

Customer

RBS is a UK-based bank, headquartered in Edinburgh, Scotland. The group operates a wide variety of banking brands, including The Royal Bank of Scotland, National Westminster Bank, Ulster Bank, Drummonds Bank and Coutts. It offers personal and business banking, private banking, insurance and corporate finance through its offices located in Europe, North America and Asia and has approximately 30 million customers worldwide. RBS has market capitalisation of over £27 billion, making it one of the largest companies on the London Stock Exchange.

Products and services

- FUJITSU Virtual Client Services
- FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX® vShape

Challenge

RBS has worked with Fujitsu in various capacities for over 14 years. What began as a tactical break/fix service has, over the years, evolved into a more strategic partnership. As the company recently embarked on a digital transformation programme focused on workplace enablement, its relationship with Fujitsu has deepened further yet.

“We aspire to be the number one bank for service, trust and advocacy. As part of that, we wanted to change how we work internally and ensure we have the right tools to better serve our customers,” explains Steve Wood, Head of Workplace Technology, RBS. “We therefore designed a five-year plan that kicked off in 2015 to deliver the foundations for this shift in thinking and working.”

RBS had a number of objectives in mind when developing this initiative: provide staff with more flexible and reliable services; ensure anytime, anywhere access; drive down customer acquisition costs; and reduce its property footprint. The company had already worked with Fujitsu in 2012 to deploy virtual client services (VCS) to 20,000 users – this model provided the blueprint to roll it out to all 90,000 global employees.

“Usually, end-user upgrades require a physical presence, which we wanted to avoid because it can cost millions. We already had the virtual solution so it was a question of rolling it out to the worldwide group without disrupting the business,” adds Wood. “The ambition was to free users from being tied to one particular device and space while incorporating non-traditional devices such as tablets.”

Solution

Fujitsu and RBS collaborated to design and deploy a robust, virtual environment, based on FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX® vShape and Microsoft HyperV. PRIMEFLEX vShape offers a simple, highly scalable platform with industry-standard components including storage, networking and virtualisation software, all running on Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers.

This enabled it to offer the latest version of Microsoft Windows as well as new tools such as Microsoft SharePoint and Microsoft 365 via an online self-service portal. Employees simply receive an email inviting them to upgrade, click on the link and wait for 20 minutes as the device automatically reconfigures itself.

“We can seamlessly give users what they keep asking for: newer versions of Office or the latest browser,” continues Wood. “The critical point is that we don’t need an engineer to visit their machine – the user can self-elect to upgrade when it suits and the virtual environment takes care of the rest.”

So far, 70,000 users around the world have upgraded to the new platform, with the remaining 20,000 to be transitioned in the next two months. These users are now no longer tied to a specific desk or device but can work securely from any device by connecting to their virtual desktop hosted on Fujitsu hardware.

Benefit

The new virtual approach to end-user computing has transformed how RBS does business and removed huge costs from operations. Employees can be more versatile in terms of where they work and which device they use, which makes them more productive while enabling the company to remove thousands of laptops and desks. That, in turn, frees up expensive properties.

The initiative is also helping RBS provide services much more quickly. New collaboration tools, such as Skype for Business, can be deployed to all users within hours rather than weeks, making the bank more responsive to user requirements. It also gives the company greater capability to act to secure vulnerabilities.

“The attack vector has been reduced because all the data is in the data centre and not floating around on local drives. Moreover, when a threat arises, we can centrally deploy patches and upgrades in minutes,” comments Wood. “This adds to the overall reliability we have come to expect from Fujitsu.”

RBS has succeeded in making its desktop services function as a secure utility that can be enjoyed by the appropriate user anywhere. It’s a cost-effective, flexible and scalable model that can deliver new services in an instant.

“We used to have a traditional customer-supplier relationship with Fujitsu but it really has evolved into a valued, strategic partnership that blurs the edges between us both,” concludes Wood. “The next step in this partnership is to explore cloud-based services and next generation devices such as wearables. We fully expect Fujitsu to continue to lead the way.”

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