



National Retailer Finds Affordable and Reliable Application Delivery With the 2X ApplicationServer

Problem

One of the nation's leading apparel retailers, M.J. Soffe delivers clothing orders to retailers across the country, and has been able to grow their brand while others have battled tough economic conditions. The company's growth necessitated the installation of a company-wide ERP system, used to track incoming orders, and requiring the use of hundreds of network desktops. IT Infrastructure Manager Ian Thieme explains that he was "faced with the prospect of having to upgrade hundreds of desktops one by one," a daunting process sapping much of his technicians' valuable availability time, and still leaving him with a non-load balanced solution without simple management controls. Also considered

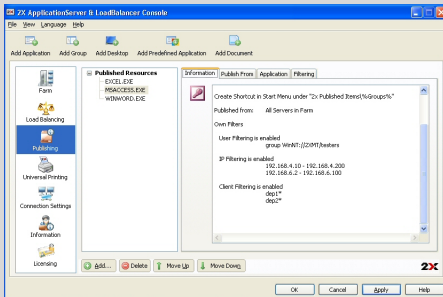
"2X has shifted the application delivery burden from the local machine to our datacenter."

- Ian Thieme, M.J. Soffe

was the possibility of future expansions, which would require re-configuring the network for specific user groups and hundreds of individual desktop moves, as well as the arduous process of even routine licensing checks and program installations across hundreds of machines individually. Recognizing the high pricepoint of Citrix and other solutions, Ian investigated 2X as an application delivery alternative, betting that remote application delivery and the simplicity and reliability of 2X products would far outweigh the cost of the purchase itself.

Solution

Through Ian's guidance, M.J. Soffe implemented the 2X ApplicationServer with its terminal server farm, having taken advantage of the product's scalability by expanding its use following an excellent performance with a limited number of servers initially. The company's terminal servers host roughly 40-60 users each, and all use Windows Server 2003 R2 64-bit, and have integrated VMware vSphere 4.0 Enterprise as the virtualization platform. Ian explains that the company's first 2X trial occurred in December of 2007, and that the testing period was extremely rigorous, taking the better part of 18 months to finalize. Ian notes that the product "was particularly easy to implement," with the configuration able to be up and running within an hour. The product was also an easy sell to company management, with a cost far below that of any other viable alternative the company examined.



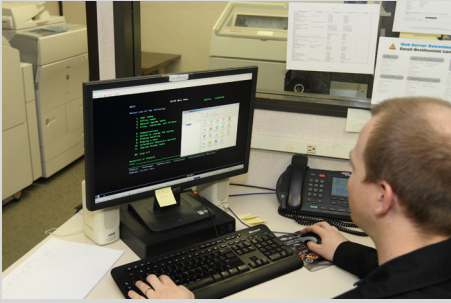
The 2X ApplicationServer allows you to publish applications and desktops from a terminal server to remote users' desktops, regardless of location.

Centralized Monitoring and Simplicity

Though Ian explains that the 2X ApplicationServer changed company application use "across the board," tangible benefits from implementation were primarily seen in three areas: application centralization, environment monitoring, and the software's straightforward operation and design.

Centralization

Rather than doling out applications in a piecemeal fashion, M.J. Soffe has used the 2X ApplicationServer to create a standardized method of delivering all necessary applications from a single source. When M.J. Soffe users have errors, rather than "send a technician to fix the problem," Ian notes that he can



M.J. Soffe employee using the 2X ApplicationServer to access his individually-filtered application suite remotely from the company's datacenter.

Operating System:
Windows Server 2003 R2

Server Type:
64-bit

Virtualization Platform:
VMware vSphere 4.0 Enterprise

Initial Implementation:
December 2007

Applications Delivered:
ERP software, Microsoft Office

“reboot the application directly from the relevant terminal server,” removing the hassle of dealing with individual desktop technical issues, saving his team valuable man hours to apply to other projects. Since many of the company's desktops have been there for some time, the company wanted to use them as long as possible, to save on the cost of purchasing brand new machines. Since the machines use applications delivered directly from terminal servers, rather than on local hard drives, Ian notes that the 2X ApplicationServer has “shifted the application delivery burden from the local machine to our datacenter, improving application access for our users.” Application delivery improvements are especially visible given the company's use of the 2X LoadBalancer, included in M.J. Soffe's 2X ApplicationServer Enterprise Edition license. He explains that “the LoadBalancer lets me know who's connected to our terminal server farm and how much of our available resources they're using, helping us make the most of 2X application delivery capabilities.” The 2X ApplicationServer/LoadBalancer integrated solution therefore easily delivers all user applications from a safe, centrally managed source, eliminating administration headaches.

Environment Monitoring

A significant change in M.J. Soffe's IT environment is the way application use can now be monitored by administrators remotely, without having to check local machines individually. Ian notes that now, he “never has to do a hardware refresh; since I have a completely-controlled Terminal Services environment using the 2X ApplicationServer, I never have to manually check desktops again.” Licensing compliance has been made particularly easy, since Ian can restrict the number of available connections accessing particular applications by filtering Active Directory user groups using the 2X ApplicationServer's administrator console. Accordingly, it's now very simple for Ian and his staff to coordinate product updates as needed, with every core application accessible to employees being clearly visible within the 2X ApplicationServer console. Any modifications to user or application settings can now be made throughout the entire network with a few simple mouse-clicks, creating a powerful way to monitor and modify application use across his configuration.

Simplicity

Not only was the 2X ApplicationServer easy to implement across the M.J. Soffe terminal server farm, but it's been noticeably easy to use on a day-to-day basis. Users log in using the 2X Client program installed on their local machines, or through the 2X Web Portal, and are able to use the specific programs administrators have filtered for their use. Ian also stated that, when filtering applications for his users, he can simply drag and drop the applications he needs from his server desktop to the console window, as well as choose from an extensive list of pre-defined applications common to users. A lack of application delivery complexity means that Ian “can spend time thinking about how I'd like to structure my environment and user groups, rather than figuring out how to use the application delivery system myself.” He also explains that he has been so impressed with the program's operation that he plans to roll out the 2X ApplicationServer for use in as many departments as possible.

About 2X

2X Software Ltd. develops enterprise server-based virtual computing software, enabling desktop virtualization and application streaming on personal computers and thin client devices. Its product line, which includes the award-winning 2X VirtualDesktopServer and 2X ApplicationServer, is easily scalable, installable, and manageable with straightforward licensing, resulting in product prices far below those of competitors. For more information, please visit: <http://www.2x.com>.

About M.J. Soffe

M.J. Soffe is a leader in providing active wear to a diverse customer base including department stores, sporting goods retailers, college bookstores and the U.S. military. Soffe has a loyal consumer following especially with young girls and teenagers who love the "Soffe" cheer short. The Soffe® brand is also well known in the military through its PT (Physical Training) Gear and its rich heritage that started the company in 1946. Using its creative artistic ability, Soffe decorates many of its products with screen print, embroidery and appliqué embellishment. M.J. Soffe, LLC is a subsidiary of Delta Apparel, Inc. and is located in Fayetteville NC. For more information, please visit: <http://www.soffe.com>.



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