

AIMAR FOUNDATION

When the Aimar Foundation, a charity founded to provide IT support to other charities, was asked to support Crisis at Christmas to help the homeless over the festive period they turned to IGEL Technology for the desktops.



Crisis is the UK national charity for single homeless people. The organization is dedicated to ending homelessness by delivering life-changing services and campaigning for change. Christmas can be an incredibly difficult time of year for a person cut off from family and home. Every year Crisis at Christmas provides companionship and support to tackle loneliness and isolation, and help people take their first steps out of homelessness. Crisis at Christmas day centres are safe, warm and vibrant places where the homeless can spend the festive period. With support from volunteers, they can enjoy hot food, a haircut, activities and entertainment and get access to healthcare and advice from specialist advisor.



SUMMARY

The Customer

- Crisis at Christmas
- National charity for the homeless
- Helping 4,000 people each Christmas

The Challenge

- Quickly establish and decommission network of secure desktops
- Save management time
- Remote access

The Solution

- IGEL UD3 WES 7
- IGEL Universal Management Suite software
- Citrix virtual Desktop Infrastructure

Key Benefits

- Fast set-up and decommission time
- Time saving centralised management

For the past four years, IGEL has been providing thin clients and support for the Crisis at Christmas initiative to help London's homeless over the festive period. 300 IGEL thin clients are used as information stations and internet telephones at Christmas Centres across the capital during the holiday, enabling 8,000 CRISIS charity volunteers to make the greatest possible difference for more than 4,000 homeless guests.

IGEL thin clients will provide access to email, word processing and collaboration tools to enable CRISIS charity volunteers to communicate and identify shelter for homeless people over the Christmas period, as well as allow homeless visitors to get in touch with friends and family or use the technology to help improve their situation.

The thin clients are part of a total IT solution provided to Crisis at Christmas by the Aimar Foundation, a charity founded to provide IT support to other charities. The Aimar Foundation is funding and setting up the information systems network, with help from global IT companies, London-based cloud specialist Vesk and the support of volunteers, principally from Morgan Stanley.

"This challenge is all about the speed of install," explained Simon Clark, of the Aimar Foundation and Executive Director at Morgan Stanley Enterprise Infrastructure. "When we first started supporting Crisis at Christmas we used fat desktops but it was a painful process. Since we have been working with IGEL and using their thin clients on the desktops we have been able to get the sites up and running and decommissioned very quickly."

Aimar tries to innovate with its technology each year to further assist the charity and with Crisis at Christmas 2014 it was able to provide a Skype video conferencing service using the IGEL thin client as a kiosk and a web camera. This allowed homeless people attending the centres to video conference with friends or families or speak to specialist advisers based at other centres across the capital or around the country.

The IT system is set-up in just two working days. The IGEL UD3 thin clients with Windows Embedded Standard 7 are connected via a VPN, which allows the team to standardize connectivity and remote manage

the devices. The devices are configured to the standard desktop required, locked down for security and accessed using a log-in and password. The devices then connect to a virtual Citrix Xenapp and Xen Desktop environment via the VPN. Aimar provides enhanced infrastructure support during the go-live period which is managed by a team in Budapest.

"The strength of relationship and support that we get from IGEL is phenomenal," said Simon. "The fact that the IGEL devices have a small form factor means they can be easily handled, installed, decommissioned and repackaged, so much more easily than a standard desktop. The fact that it isn't a traditional PC device also helps from a security standpoint. The thin clients can be easily locked down and no personal information or data is stored on the device."

"We are providing thin clients and IT expertise, through the Aimar Foundation, to enable CRISIS to home, feed, clothe and advise those who, often through no fault of their own, have lost everything," said Simon Richards, IGEL's UK Managing Director.

“The IGEL thin clients are ideal for Crisis at Christmas because they are simple and fast to set-up using our centralised management software, secure because all data is held on central servers and reliable because they have no fan or moving parts.”

For further information about Crisis at Christmas visit: <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/christmas.html>

For further information about the Aimar Foundation visit: www.theaimarfoundation.org

Visit us online at igel.com



Revolutionary in its
Simplicity