

NEDERLANDSE VERENIGING VAN BANKEN

Software-based thin clients deliver increased productivity and major cost savings



The Nederlandse Vereniging van Banken (NVB; Dutch Banking Association) strives to optimally promote the interests of its members. Thanks to the use of a cloud environment and thin clients, they are able to work fast and cost-efficiently.



Following a migration to the cloud, the Nederlandse Vereniging van Banken (NVB; Dutch Banking Association) wanted to replace its desktop systems. These clients were very slow in starting up, and their audio and video support needed updating. Added to which, their operating system, Windows XP, was no longer supported by Microsoft and was proving difficult to manage. Instead of purchasing new hardware, the NVB decided to transform the existing systems into Linux-based thin clients using IGEL's Universal Desktop Converter (UDC2) software. This did not just solve all of the NVB's problems - it also yielded major cost savings.

SUMMARY

The Customer

- The Dutch Banking Association (NVB)
- Core tasks: promotion of the collective interests of the banking sector, provision of knowledge and advice, determining the collective labour agreement for banks.
- 56 employees.

The Challenge

- To shorten the boot times of workplaces
- To simplify the management of thin clients
- To implement a cost-efficient solution

The Solution

- Cloud environment based on Microsoft Windows 2008
- IGEL Universal Desktop Converter 2 (UDC2)
- IGEL Universal Management Suite (UMS)

Key Benefits

- The boot times for clients have been reduced from 4 to 1.5 minutes
- A strongly improved client performance
- Minimization of the client-management effort
- Significant savings on the purchase costs
- Lower depreciation costs thanks to the reuse of existing hardware

The NVB, the interest group of the Dutch banking sector, migrated to the cloud in 2013. "It became increasingly difficult to ensure all systems were up to date and operational on a 24/7 basis," explains Laurens Verbruggen, Service Team Leader at the NVB. This decision also had consequences for the association's desktop systems. Verbruggen: "We have been working with thin clients for almost 15 years. When we switched to the cloud, we used thin clients by Samsung that ran Windows XP and Citrix. However, our new cloud environment did not provide any support for Citrix. This resulted in audio and video issues on the clients."

IT management and speed bottlenecks

The thin clients were running Windows XP and proved difficult to manage. "We use approximately 60 clients. When, for example, we needed to update our virus scanner, we had to install updates on every single machine. This involved a great deal of work," explains Verbruggen. The fact that Windows XP and tools like the virus scanner ran locally also placed an excessive burden on the clients. Verbruggen: "The performance left little to be desired: the systems took ages to boot, and the screens were not refreshed quickly enough."

Conversion into Linux-based thin clients

Initially, the NVB set out to look for replacement thin clients. During this search, it came across the UDC solution by IGEL Technology. "We evaluated thin client solutions by various vendors until Square One, our hardware supplier, pointed out the possibility of converting our existing desktop systems into Linux-based thin clients using a special software solution. We had no idea this was possible. Square One provided us with a converted system for testing purposes, which we found to work very well. This greatly simplified our decision to go ahead and purchase UDC2 software", comments Verbruggen

Rollout within two months

Using IGEL's solution, it took us no time to convert the 60-odd Windows XP-based thin clients into Linux-based thin clients. All systems had been converted within two months' time. "A quick rollout was important to us, as our end users were starting to complain about

excessive start-up times," explains Verbruggen. Square One assisted the NVB during the conversion process. "We had to find our way a little as we had no prior Linux knowledge. However, through IGEL Technology and a couple of internet forums, we were able to quickly get up to speed. Square One played an important part in fine-tuning the new environment and ensured that UDC properly functioned in combination with our cloud solution."

Booting up within of 1.5 minutes

IGEL's special thin-client variant of Linux is now the only thing running on the thin clients. End-users now work in the cloud with Windows 8 and their office and administrative software. Since the rollout, they no longer have any complaints about the speed of the thin clients. "Their systems now boot up in 1.5 minutes rather than 4 minutes. The overall performance has improved as viewed with the faster refreshing of the screens. The end users really were pleasantly surprised," comments Verbruggen.

Drastically improved ease of management

IGEL's Universal Management Suite (UMS) allows the NVB to easily manage all of its thin clients from a centralized location. "UMS really is a fresh breath of air to us. We can now manage thin clients using the drag and drop principle. When I want to add a new icon to the desktop of the employees, all it takes is a simple mouse click. The management effort on the client level is also minimal", explains Verbruggen. "Windows XP really proved a major headache, but we've done away with it. This means we no longer have to secure all the individual clients, as all of this now takes place on the server."

Major savings on purchase and depreciation costs

From a financial perspective, the NVB is also much better off with IGEL Technology's solution. "A new hardware-based thin client will retail for approximately 600 Euros, while an IGEL UDC2 license only sets one back approximately 60 Euros," comments Verbruggen. In addition to benefiting from the major cost savings this yields, it has also enabled the NVB to continue using its existing hardware for a longer period of time.

Visit us online at igel.com



Revolutionary in its
Simplicity