

WHITNEY BAILEY COX & MAGNANI, LLC (WBCM)

Mid-Atlantic engineering firm teams with IGEL to improve VDI experience



WBCM was a little over four years into its Citrix VDI deployment. The mid-Atlantic engineering firm WBCM, had been conducting a proof of concept (PoC) of industry-leading VDI solutions from Citrix and other providers, tapping into the expertise of its Washington D.C. area solution provider, Plan B Technologies, Inc.



FEATURE QUOTE

“ The ROI with IGEL is tremendous. We don’t spend a lot of time supporting our endpoints. We ship out the IGEL device, the end-user plugs it in, logs into their desktop and begins working right away. It’s just that easy.”

~ Chris Calaf, Vice President, Information Systems,
Whitney Bailey, Cox & Magnani, LLC

SUMMARY

The Customer

WBCM has more than 40 years of experience delivering professional engineering, architecture, and construction services. Since 1977, WBCM has grown from four partners to over 200 employees. The company produces annual billings in excess of \$26 million and consistently earns a place on the Engineering News-Record’s list of Top 500 Design Firms.

The Challenge

- Looming hardware refresh for aging workstations
- Growing demand for unified communications and collaboration (UCC) capabilities including Skype® for Business
- Need to provide remote-access to graphics-intensive CAD applications and support for dual monitors

The Solution

- IGEL Universal Desktop (UD6) thin clients
- IGEL OS
- IGEL Universal Management Suite (UMS)

Key Benefits

- Ease of management and configuration
- Improved resource allocation and cost savings
- Alignment with Citrix
- Integration with NVIDIA GPUs

Among the top requirements that the firm was looking to address as part of its VDI PoC included support for unified communications and collaboration (UCC) and high-performance graphics capabilities. “We were in the process of expanding our footprint by opening offices in other cities and knew that we’d need UCC to support collaboration between our end-users,” said Chris Calaf, Vice President, Information Systems, WBCM. **“Further, we needed to be able to share access to graphics intensive files and CAD applications with our branch offices. This had always been one of our biggest challenges with VDI.”**

Calaf added, “One of the reasons we ultimately selected Citrix VDI as part of our PoC was its partnership with NVIDIA. The NVIDIA GPU is now helping us achieve the performance levels our users want and desire from their workstations. Citrix also provides a better protocol for supporting high-latency and integrations with popular UCC applications including Skype for Business, which improved communication and collaboration between our offices.”

WBCM’s PoC didn’t stop with their Citrix VDI deployment. The firm also had a fleet of aging workstations that needed to be refreshed. “We began a pilot project, testing thin clients from several leading U.S.-based hardware manufacturers at the time,” said Calaf. “We needed dual-monitor functionality and were leaning toward one thin client model, in particular, when the manufacturer was acquired. After that, we saw development decline dramatically, and began to look elsewhere.”

Plan B Technologies, Inc. suggested that WBCM take a look at IGEL. “IGEL was just starting to penetrate the U.S. market, and we were impressed by the engineering capabilities, high level of support and tight integration with Citrix and NVIDIA,” said Donnie Downs, President and CEO, Plan B Technologies, Inc.

WBCM ordered a demo unit from IGEL and the rest, as they say, is history. “Within a matter of a few hours after receiving the unit we were up and running,” said Calaf. **“Our local IGEL representative helped us install the IGEL UMS and from there we connected to our Citrix VDI infrastructure, provision workstations, create policies and much more.”**

Immediately realizing the performance benefits of the IGEL solution, the firm began testing IGEL with the Citrix ICA client and Skype for Business optimization packs for Citrix. “We were impressed by the early access to beta and pre-release versions of the software for testing through IGEL. Even while in beta, we experienced solid functionality. IGEL’s alignment with enhancements coming out from both Citrix and NVIDIA was also a key selling point.”

Following the PoC and testing of the IGEL devices, WBCM purchased the IGEL UD6 thin clients, along with the IGEL UMS software. **“The ROI with IGEL is tremendous,” said Calaf. “We don’t spend a lot of time supporting our endpoints. We ship out the IGEL device, the end-user plugs it in, logs into their desktop and begins working right away. It’s just that easy.”**

WBCM also reports that the level of service and support since deploying IGEL has been superb. “There have been no device failures on the floor, and we have not purchased a workstation in four years,” said Calaf. “We are currently spending a fraction of what our previous solution was costing us. Any and all upgrades to the endpoints are software driven. There are no moving parts to replace and this is saving us a tremendous amount of time and money.”

WBCM currently has around 200 IGEL UD6 thin clients deployed at its four offices located in Baltimore and across Pennsylvania. The firm is also looking at how to integrate the IGEL Cloud Gateway. **“In the future, we would like to be able to give our users the ability to take their IGEL desktops home with them, and the IGEL Cloud Gateway would provide us with the level of security we would need to support that.”**

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