

Transforming IT Lifecycle Management with AppSense user virtualization



Overview

AppSense user virtualization enables organizations to transform their computing strategy and embrace a people-centric approach to IT-as-a-Service



What is transformation?

IT pros are hearing the term “desktop transformation” with growing regularity. But what does it really mean? Deploying virtual desktop infrastructure? Windows 7 migration? Application virtualization? Or enabling the use of iPads and employee-owned PCs?

At AppSense, we think the answer is all of the above. The IT environment of the future will be heterogeneous, comprising multiple technologies, both physical and virtual. It will also be constantly changing in response to company and employee demand, and with the advent of new technologies. Rather than thinking about “desktop transformation” as a set of chronological events that take you from a physical to a virtual environment, we think IT pros should view transformation as a set of skills and technologies that can be applied on an ongoing basis as needs and technologies evolve.

About AppSense

We are the leading provider of user virtualization technology to enterprise organizations. User virtualization is a way of managing user-specific information independent of the desktop, and applying this information into any desktop (local install, virtualized, published, streamed etc) on-demand. This enables IT to standardize the desktop build, automate desktop and application delivery, and migrate users to new desktops – all while ensuring the user experience is seamless, personal, predictable and easily manageable.

The inevitable move from an infrastructure-based computing environment to a service-based, user-centric model is a high priority for many enterprises. However, these companies are set to face myriad challenges as they replace existing systems with virtualization technologies in a bid to reduce operational cost and improve employee productivity; challenges including the appearance of hidden cost in support and management, also user acceptance issues are the user experience is potentially compromised. Such challenges can be avoided by taking a user-centric focus through your transformation journey.

Why transform now?

The short answer: because if you don't embrace transformation, your users will do it for you.

The old rules of corporate computing no longer apply. Increasingly tech-savvy knowledge workers are introducing tablets, smartphones, and unknown applications into the enterprise at an unprecedented rate. While it flies in the face of traditional IT best practices, it is today's new reality.

Meanwhile, enterprise IT strategy is at a tipping point. A new generation of virtual desktops, application delivery methods, coupled with practical needs in areas such as Windows 7 migration and PC refresh, are driving a shift from the static, infrastructure-based computing of today to a more flexible and adaptable IT-as-a-Service model, orchestrated around the user and their requirements at any point in time.

A sound IT transformation strategy brings this rapidly expanding collection of challenges and priorities together into a cohesive lifecycle that will both optimize your existing IT management activities and allow you to embrace the diverse set of devices and applications that users are demanding.

What are the benefits of a people-centric computing strategy?

Embracing a people-centric strategy enables IT to become more flexible by removing the need to manage at the device, platform or application level. This gives both IT and employees greater freedom of choice, while retaining control over what is delivered and how it is used. Among many things, managing the user independently from the specific devices and desktops they use enables:

- Freedom of choice - selecting fit-for-purpose technology without compromising employee experience
- Consumerization - empower employees to use their own tools to get their jobs done
- True IT-as-a-Service - managing and delivering desktop components as needed
- Device independence - ensure an optimum employee experience across all devices
- An end to migration - never again need to migrate users to new platforms - they're already there!

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An integrated eco-system

While AppSense user virtualization can serve as a centerpiece of your IT transformation lifecycle, through our AppSense Affinity program we have brought together a collection of leading solution providers who can bring further insights and capabilities to your transformation project. AppSense and our Affinity Partners provide proven, repeatable best practices and best in class technology to enable rapid project completion and maximum user acceptance at minimal cost and complexity.

We view IT transformation as comprised of three key competencies:

- **Assessment** - of the existing user environment
 - Understand: the existing user environment
 - Optimize: decide what needs to be delivered to the user and how
 - Prioritize: the most critical aspects to transform
- **Analysis** - categorization and migration of applications to multiple technologies
 - Compatibility: will my applications work in the new environment
 - Remediation: how best to fix incompatibilities
 - Automation: virtualize and be ready for deployment
- **Deployment** - of the desktop, operating system, applications and the user to any device
 - Flexibility: with multiple options on how best to deliver assets
 - Efficiency: utilize standardized assets across multiple users
 - Centralization: of IT services and end user services

All three of these transformation phases are unpinning by user virtualization technology. User virtualization ensures that all aspects of the user are abstracted from the existing environment during the transformation process, enabling the organization to capture everything about an employee, setting them on a course for true independent user management and accelerating the transformation of the desktop and applications to a 'mixed desktop' world.

Key transformation projects

No matter what your current or next project is, approaching transformation as continuous lifecycle will make managing change part of your IT team's collective DNA. For many organizations, the next major project on the horizon is Windows 7 adoption. Other initiatives such as application and desktop virtualization, cloud computing and bring your own device are on the horizon. User virtualization can help organize, simplify, and remove cost from these projects, further reducing on-going operational spend and improving the user experience.

- Windows 7 migration - reduced migration costs, simplified execution, shortened project time
- Application virtualization - decreased packaging requirements and IT overhead, increased user adoption
- Desktop virtualization - enable stateless virtual desktops with a personalized and responsive user experience
- Cloud computing - de-risk cloud delivery, a personal experience with retained control and ownership
- BYOD - device independence with secure and optimum employee experience

User-centric computing and future success

Until you can decouple the user and all of their information from the existing operating systems, applications and devices, it is difficult to implement a user-centric computing strategy that dynamically constructs a desktop around the context of the user, across combinations accessing devices and delivery methods. With full understanding of the current estate and user virtualization providing the ability to separate and manage the user independently, IT transformation becomes an on-going, evolving discipline that at each step further simplifies and reduces the cost and complexity of adoption each new technology or project

You are the technology - manage the user, not the device.

