

Swisscom IT Services

With PC Lifecycle Management from FrontRange Solutions, Swisscom IT Services was able to significantly reduce the operational expenses while improving the service quality at the same time when outsourcing the Desktop Services for Swiss Federal Railway SBB

CUSTOMER PROFILE

INDUSTRY

Information Technology,
IT Outsourcing

CHALLENGE

- Complex Citrix environment
- Distribution of 280 applications, many of which operate in several languages
- Seamless software installation
- Incorporation of existing OS deployment system

SOLUTION

- Evaluation of solutions available on the market
- Use of Enteo Management Suite for Citrix XenApp™
- Enteo solution as part of the Swisscom standard portfolio

RESULT

- State of the art solution with high stability
- Highest reliability and consistency during installation
- High availability of environment and tools
- Basis for standardization for other clients' solutions

SBB's unique requirements were key behind the decision to build a Citrix environment for the central application service. SBB needed a solution that would cover all its locations across Switzerland spanning almost 800 train stations and 200 additional sites with standardized IT systems and high SLA standards. With the change of the operations service partner, Swisscom IT Services was commissioned to set up the renewed, consolidated and highly redundant Citrix environment.

The upside to starting from scratch

It was one of Switzerland's leading providers for outsourcing solutions who won the bid for this extensive contract amounting to more than CHF 100 million. The company now services over 80,000 PC workstations for clients, including SBB, in addition to running more than 8,000 client servers through its own data centers. In the Citrix-based area alone, there are about 25 environments for different clients comprising about 1,200 terminal servers. That way SBB was able to benefit from the experience gathered in previous projects. But the large scale of this project set new standards even for Swisscom IT Services.

The starting shot for the new environment had already been fired in 2005: As part of a detailed analysis, the technical concepts were developed based on the contracts and experiences of past projects. Special attention was paid to the seamless availability during the migration phase when users were transferred to a new environment, a process that took several months.

"We had the advantage of starting on a green field", said Carsten Dreyer, Head of Solution Architects at Swisscom IT Services. "So we could evaluate the full range of hard and software tools for this demanding

Swiss Federal Railways SBB

The approximately 27,000 staff of the Swiss Federal Railways (SBB), headquartered in Bern, transport passengers and freight across Switzerland and neighboring countries and operate subsidiaries in several European countries. Every year, SBB carries more than 300 million passengers and about 60 million net tons of freight. SBB's 9,000 trains account for 87 percent of passenger-km and 90 percent of ton-km.

large-scale environment. We also used this constellation to develop the highest possible standardization level of the tools."

Central platform for 280 applications

About half of the Citrix terminal servers of the two Swisscom data centers are now in operation for SBB. They serve about 25,000 named users or 10,000 concurrent users that are allotted by an intelligent dispatching mechanism according to business criteria (priority in case of partial malfunction) and technical considerations (equal distribution to farms and data centers, controlled restart).

Today about 280 applications run on the central platforms, many of which operate in three languages. They require thin clients without local applications. In addition, applications necessary for the railway services are operated decentrally with centrally operated applications being "supplied". The production environment consists of a more than 650 productive terminal servers across two farms and about 30 server groups (Silos), each providing different applications.

For the automated software management of the Citrix XenApp™, the engineering team decided to opt for the Enteo solution. "Given the complexity of the task involving the Enteo complete set up and management of a farm, the options available on the market were limited from the start. We did not want a black box solution. We wanted a solution that would offer our windows engineers greater insight and leeway

into handling the environment. In addition, we already had a good proprietary solution for the basic installation of the operating system in place. Enteo was the only company that was capable of providing the consistent software configuration management within the given complex environment while also enabling the integration and advancement of the current OS installation." A live test was conducted during the evaluation: As the complete environment for load tests had to be set up well ahead of the launch of operations, the products were subjected to ample testing. Enteo passed the tests with flying colors and – last but not least – offered competitive prices.

Swisscom IT Services

Swisscom IT Services, a subsidiary of Switzerland's biggest telecommunications company

Swisscom, is one of the country's leading providers of information technology services.

Its core business encompasses the integration and cost-effective operation of complex IT infrastructures, as complete or partial outsourcing projects. Many years of IT experience, combined with the company's expertise in implementing new global technologies, form the basis for the economical and future-oriented IT solutions that Swisscom IT Services offers its clients. The company's proven industry knowledge spans clients in the telecommunications, financial and healthcare industry, the area of public administration and media companies.

2,700 staff generated net revenues of CHF 836 million in 2006.

Enteo as part of a standard portfolio

While the competitive evaluation was completed after six weeks, the implementation phase lasted from spring to end 2006, proceeding without any noteworthy software problems. Enteo consultants were occasionally called upon during the introductory and optimization phase while internal competencies were still being built up. Since then, Enteo is not only used for SBB data processors but has also been phased in for other customers in order to install all servers in one standardized, comprehensible automated process. "Already after a short training session the operators are skilled to manage the servers using the Enteo Management





Suite for Citrix XenApp™”, comments Christoph Hirschburger responsible for Enteo environments. As part of the evaluated standard portfolio the solution will consistently be used as part of other Citrix-based service renewals and new clients in the Citrix environment.

“The Enteo Management Suite for Citrix XenApp™ enables us to successfully meet the demands of efficient change and release management as well as fast updates in a challenging environment,” Carsten Dreyer says. Everyday servers receive software updates, amounting to some 140 systems in peak times. For the purposes of consistency, a full installation “from

scratch” takes place. The first months have shown that the longterm efficient operability of the systems is ensured and operational expenses have been significantly reduced.

Dreyer looks ahead: “Also from today’s perspective we would select Enteo again. What’s more, with the choice of Enteo for SBB, we have introduced a pilot installation serving as the basis for the new standard. The next step is to expand the tool to industry specific installations, for instance for our clients in the banking sector. At the same time, we are looking to introduce the solution for other clients, and even for Swisscom Group’s entire server landscape.”

PARTNER PROFILE

Swisscom IT Services, SBB’s outsourcing partner, banks on Enteo’s management suite for its reliable and fully automated software configuration management in the Citrix environment.

Summary

With a central farm environment and the automated software configuration management of the servers with Enteo Management Suite for Citrix XenApp™, Swisscom IT is able to provide SBB with all applications around the clock, featuring both high availability and standardization. What's more, it was even possible to significantly reduce operational expenses with the implementation of the environment while enhancing service quality.



About FrontRange Solutions

FrontRange Solutions develops software and services that growing mid-size firms and distributed enterprises rely on every day to build great customer relationships and deliver high-quality customer service. The company applies a unique combination of innovation and automation with a standards-based approach to simplify core business processes, including: IT service management; customer relationship and sales force management; and PC lifecycle management. More than 150,000 of the world's best-known brands use FrontRange offerings to quickly improve their interactions with external and internal clients and achieve better business results. For more information please visit www.frontrange.com



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