

User Virtualization and Windows 7

...migration... personalization... satisfaction...



Microsoft Windows 7 looks set to be the next big desktop operating system, with many organizations refreshing their PC estate as they move to Windows 7. This refresh will inevitably bring about a re-assessment of the corporate desktop estate; one that is likely to consider lowering desktop management costs by moving to centrally-managed virtual desktops.

Migrating employees to Windows 7 could be a risky and expensive proposition, especially if it affects the employee's working environment. AppSense's user virtualization technology manages all the user-specific elements of the Windows 7 migration process as well as providing an alternative approach to managing the user aspects of the desktop post migration.

Upgrading to Windows 7 on the physical PC



A major challenge in migrating existing users to Windows 7 is user personalization settings and desktop setup scripts. It's highly unlikely that anything used to set up and configure the desktop, or, anything the user has done to personalize their existing desktop will be compatible with the new Windows 7 desktop. The result? All upgraded employees have to re-personalize their desktop reapplying application settings. One of the most important considerations in a Windows 7 migration is the retention of all user-specific information (the "user personality") from the 'old' desktop and simply injecting this back into the new Windows 7 desktop, ensuring a seamless experience to the user.

Migrating to a virtual Windows 7 desktop

Virtual Windows 7 desktops not only provide employees with a new OS, they can also provide significant desktop management cost reduction opportunities; no need to upgrade the desktop machine with hardware capable of running the new OS (as this can now be re-purposed as a 'thin client'), centralized management of desktops, monitoring of the environment to reduce support costs etc.

However, the bulk of desktop management cost reductions are realized in the use of a single, standard Windows 7-based desktop image across the entire company. Imagine creating ONE corporate Windows 7 desktop (possibly with a selection of baseline corporate apps such as Outlook and IE) and to have this provisioned to each employee as they require it. When the employee goes home, the desktop is deleted. No need to store and manage individual desktops, instead they're delivered on an 'as-needed' basis.



However, this standard Windows 7 image is by no means personal to the user. This is where AppSense and user virtualization comes in. By centrally managing all aspects of the user independent of this standard Windows 7 desktop, it can then be applied to the desktop when needed. The result is a low cost, standard Windows 7 estate company-wide, with employees experiencing the same working environment as when they were using their desktop PC. All this across any combination of desktop and application delivery technology (Citrix, VMware, Microsoft etc).

By managing the user aspect of the corporate PC as a separate entity - the desktop business tools (apps and OS) are able to be standardized and their delivery automated, leading to huge reductions in cost (management, storage, licensing) and productive employees.

The 7 things you need to know about Windows 7

Here are some of the most important user-centric items that must be considered as part of any Windows 7 migration. All these things are possible today with AppSense user virtualization technology.

1. Low cost, low risk migration to Windows 7 on your physical PCs

Seamlessly decouple all aspects of the user from the employees existing PC (XP, Vista), and reapply this data into a fresh, standard Windows 7 PC. The employee sees no change to the personal settings post-upgrade.

2. Eliminate the costs associated with using legacy scripts and bloated user profiles

Your Windows 7 migration affords the opportunity to replace outdated and management-intensive methods to manage the user experience on the desktop. Complex, often large login scripts can be replaced and selectively executed dependent on the user needs. Maintenance is reduced, as is the user logon time.

3. Low cost, low risk migration to Windows 7 in a virtual desktop environment

Decouple the user from the existing PC and store this independent of the desktop. The user can then be redirected to a low cost, standard, virtualized Windows 7 image, where their personality is applied on-demand. A low-cost physical-to-“Windows 7 virtual” migration process, with the employee seeing no change to their PC experience.

4. Ensure seamless user experience in multi-OS desktop estate

Regardless of whether your desktop estate is a mix of XP, Vista or Windows 7, the same centralized, independent user personality is able to seamlessly ‘roam’ across each OS version. This enables you to implement Windows 7 into your desktop estate gradually, without having to create multiple user profiles for each OS version.

5. Establish lowest cost Windows 7 desktop environment through standardized, personalized desktop images

Desktop management and storage costs can be reduced significantly by standardizing on your Windows 7 corporate image. By having one standard Windows 7 desktop provided to employees on-demand, desktop management becomes much easier and less risky. Including personality management into this scenario enables this standard desktop to be dynamically personalized on-access, providing the employee with their familiar PC-type experience.

6. Personalize virtualized applications

Many legacy, home grown and XP-based applications are unsuitable for use in a Windows 7 environment, making application virtualization a necessity. Unless the company is prepared to virtualize each individual employee’s applications, virtualized applications must be standard and therefore non-personal in nature. Applications must be automatically configured for each specific user and/or connecting device, and automatically personalized to the user based on their personality. You can now accelerate the Windows 7 roll-out since incompatible applications are virtualized, yet still remain personal to the employee.

7. Quickly and easily scale Windows 7 implementation with no impact to user experience

The user is provided with a consistent personal experience across multiple client OS versions, multiple delivery technologies, multiple accessing devices and accommodates the employee context (e.g. security level, accessing location etc). Old, version 1 profiles used in XP and Windows Server 2003 are not compatible with Windows 7 or Server 2008, therefore it is essential to use AppSense to capture existing data from the profile, manage it separately the reapply the settings to any new desktop OS.



For further information please visit: www.appsense.com/solutions/Windows7.aspx