

WHITE PAPER

Quantifying the Business Value of VMware View

Sponsored by: VMware

Michael Rose

Randy Perry

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IDC OPINION

An analysis of organizations adopting a centralized virtual desktop (CVD) computing environment with the use of VMware View shows that investment in the technology can result in significant business value with very high return on investment (ROI). Our analysis also yielded the following observations:

- ☒ Organizations deploying VMware View saved on average over \$610 per supported end user per year compared with organizations using unmanaged PCs. Savings came from lower device and IT staff support costs — over \$480 — and improved productivity (reduced downtime) — over \$130.
- ☒ Organizations leveraging the advanced capabilities available in VMware View Premier, such as ThinApp application virtualization and View Composer image management, saved an additional \$122 per year compared with organizations that had not deployed ThinApp and View Composer with VMware View.
- ☒ To maximize the value associated with the adoption of centralized virtual desktops, organizations must be aware of the limitations of the platform, such as performance, mobile access, and datacenter capacity.

METHODOLOGY

IDC's ROI model draws upon surveys conducted of IT professionals who have deployed VMware View as their CVD platform. IDC's estimate of ROI is determined through the following three-step process:

- ☒ Measuring the savings from reduced operations costs (consolidation of hardware and software, avoided staff hired), increased operations efficiency, increased revenue, and improved user productivity
- ☒ Ascertaining the investment made in deploying the solution and the associated training and support costs
- ☒ Projecting the costs and savings over a three-year period and calculating the ROI and payback for the deployed solution

IDC uses the net present value (NPV) of the savings over three years in calculating the ROI and payback period for the deployment. The NPV of the savings is determined by subtracting the discounted three-year investments from the discounted three-year benefits. IDC uses a 12% discount factor to account for the returns that this capital could have realized if invested elsewhere (opportunity cost).

IDC uses the following assumptions in its calculations:

- ☒ To quantify savings from IT efficiency, IDC multiplies time values by burdened salary (salary + 40% for benefits and overhead).
- ☒ Because the full benefits of the solution are not available during the deployment period, IDC prorates the benefits on a monthly basis and subtracts the appropriate amount for the deployment time from the first-year savings.

The ROI and payback period estimates presented within this white paper represent IDC's estimate of the general business value realized through the successful deployment of VMware View either as a platform used to manage users who otherwise are difficult to control with traditional tools or as a desktop computing platform for a homogeneous segment of the overall desktop environment for which a server-based computing architecture is appropriate.

IN THIS WHITE PAPER

This white paper provides a quantitative measurement of the business value, defined as the expected ROI, associated with the use of VMware View as a platform for the targeted deployment of a CVD computing architecture. It further provides an analysis of the View Composer and ThinApp features of VMware View, including a quantification of the value associated with the features and an overview of how they work.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

To ensure that PCs continue to be operational in order to maximize the productivity of employees, IT must perform a range of tasks. Although the extent to which these tasks pose challenges to IT varies significantly depending on the number of desktops in the environment and the regulatory requirements that must be met, the requirements for maintaining a desktop environment are fairly consistent and are often viewed in the framework of a PC life cycle. The PC life cycle includes the following tasks:

- ☒ **Acquisition.** PC hardware and software must first be acquired. Depending on the size of the organization, IT may have very high or very low levels of involvement.
- ☒ **Deployment.** After the acquisition of PC hardware and software, the IT department is responsible for maintaining an inventory of the PC's assets, preparing the PC for delivery to the user by installing applications and data, and then physically delivering the device to the user.
- ☒ **Maintenance.** After original delivery of the PC to a user, IT is responsible for maintaining the PC to ensure that it continues in its working state by providing software updates, keeping track of any hardware/software changes made to the PC, and servicing the PC in the event of failure.
- ☒ **Retirement.** Once a PC has reached the end of its useful life for a given user, IT is responsible for performing the tasks necessary to remove it from the environment or give it to another user. This process can involve various tasks, but typically it includes deleting sensitive data, removing installed applications to harvest licenses, and disposing of the device.

To simplify the tasks that make up the PC life cycle, technology vendors have developed a range of solutions that have been adopted in significant number, including configuration management databases (CMDBs), electronic software distribution (ESD) tools, asset management tools, and desktop virtualization enabled through the use of hypervisors, among many others.

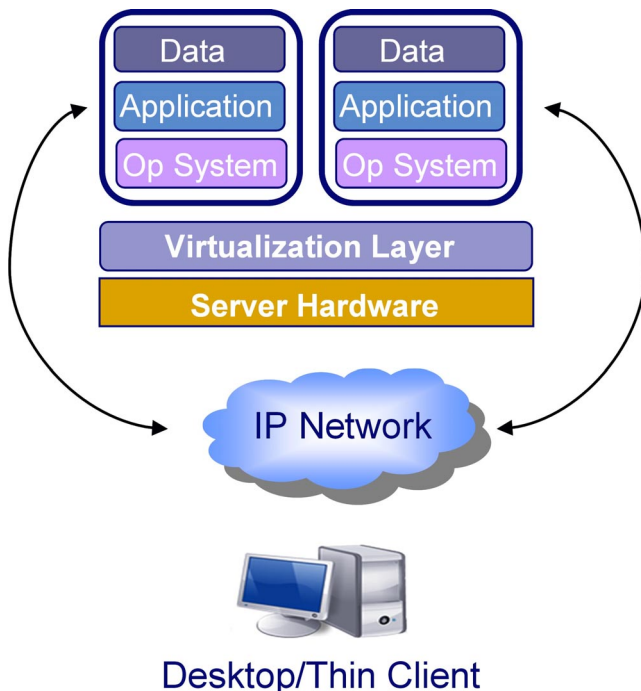
Simplifying PC Management Through Virtualization

Of the technologies currently available, hypervisors represent the most recent addition to the set of tools that can be used to efficiently manage PC environments. After a tremendous growth in demand for the use of hypervisors for server virtualization to enable hardware consolidation as well as other capabilities, hypervisors are now being applied to the desktop environment in various ways. In many cases, legacy hypervisor platforms are installed on physical PCs to provide users with the ability to run multiple isolated and unique desktops on one physical PC, enabling users to run a Windows OS and Mac OS side by side on the same PC, for example.

More recently, IT organizations have been leveraging server virtualization for the purposes of hosting multiple isolated and unique desktop environments, which end users access remotely from their desks through thin clients. This model is referred to by IDC as centralized virtual desktops (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

Centralized Virtual Desktops



Source: IDC, 2009

The use of hypervisor technology as an infrastructure for desktops enables a far more flexible architecture. The elimination of the logical bond between physical PC hardware and the applications delivered by the PC can significantly simplify the many tasks necessary for the management of the PC. By using this new architecture, IT organizations can more effectively and efficiently manage their desktop environments, particularly for end users who are largely outside the lasso of existing desktop management tools.

The Benefits of Centralized Virtual Desktops

Enterprises have discovered that the use of virtualization to support desktop workloads, like the use of virtualization in support of traditional server workloads, creates a range of significant benefits. These benefits include improved IT management efficiency, improved price efficiencies, and improved functional capabilities. Examples of these benefits include:

- ☒ **Enablement of thin clients.** Because little computational execution occurs at the edge in a CVD environment, the computing architecture becomes less reliant upon the horsepower in endpoint devices. This creates an opportunity for IT to significantly drive down the cost of endpoint hardware either by extending the life span of existing PCs by repurposing them as CVD endpoints or by replacing aging PCs with a thin-client device, which typically operates across a life span twice that of a standard PC.
- ☒ **Improved data security.** The ability to move data from the edge of the IT environment into the datacenter inherently reduces the security risks to an IT organization. Centralization of data access can mitigate the risk of data leakage and theft and simplify compliance procedures.
- ☒ **Simplified data backup.** Because centralized virtual desktops reside entirely within the datacenter, it is easier to ensure full compliance with backup policies. Furthermore, depending on how the platform is architected, the use of consolidated images and delta files may further simplify the abstraction and collection of important data, thereby simplifying backup processes. A legal firm concerned about backup explained, "On a regular computer, the hard drive can crash and data can be lost. With centralized virtual desktops, the system is constantly backing up that data."
- ☒ **Simplified disaster recovery.** Virtual machines significantly simplify disaster recovery because central IT staff can easily revert virtual desktops back to their last known good states. Thus, IT no longer needs to provide spare endpoints that are up to date with the latest image.
- ☒ **Time to deployment.** In particular, when thin clients are used within a CVD architecture, the process around deployment is significantly simplified because nothing is installed on the endpoint device. According to a healthcare provider executive, "The benefits of the virtual desktops start with the ease of deployment of applications...If it [traditionally] takes me an hour per PC over a period of a year deploying new applications to that PC, now I probably only spend 15 minutes to do that same deployment to the virtual PC."

- ☒ **Simplified PC maintenance.** When used appropriately, virtual desktops can be far easier to maintain than traditional PCs. Because of the unique characteristics of virtual machines, it can become quite simple to patch applications, provision/deprovision users, migrate to new operating systems, and perform auditing duties. One legal organization highlighted this aspect, saying that "the big benefit for us has been centralized desktop support."
- ☒ **Flexibility of access.** Because corporate desktop environments are centralized, access to them can be provided to users who do not have access to their corporate PCs, in situations where users need to work from home, away from their desks, or among other remote worker situations. As the manager of a CVD for a major European bank's IT department explained, "We have about 2,500 to 3,000 people going to our new building, but we are going to have considerably more people than that in the new building...They will be able to sit anywhere they like...or...go to another building and still get access to the same desktops as well. So it's all about the flexibility."

Challenges for Centralized Virtual Desktops

Even when CVD environments are appropriately designed, there are still certain limitations inherent within the architecture that limit the applicability of centralized virtual desktops for a large percentage of the IT environment. These limitations include:

- ☒ **Up-front capital expenditures.** Compared with the up-front capital expenditures of deploying a traditionally distributed PC, the up-front capital expenditures associated with building a CVD environment can be significant. These expenditures include storage infrastructure, server hardware, virtualization and virtualization management software, and network infrastructure. Additionally, this new model requires Microsoft Windows licenses for CVD, namely Vista Enterprise Centralized Desktop.
- ☒ **Datacenter capacity.** Datacenter capacity constraints can significantly limit the extent to which an organization can support centralized virtual desktops internally. With the increasing scarcity of datacenter floor space and power, the capacity available to host desktops on hardware residing in the datacenter can ultimately limit the extent to which this architecture can be used.
- ☒ **Performance.** The performance limitations associated with centralized computing architectures are familiar to many IT managers given their experiences with other server-based computing platforms such as Microsoft's Terminal Services. Limitations in the areas of bandwidth, latency, and graphics capabilities act to limit the types of end users to whom CVD technology can be deployed today.
- ☒ **IT contention.** The requirement for desktop operations management to rely on server administrators within the datacenter can create a challenge for those looking to leverage CVD within their desktop environments.
- ☒ **Network connectivity.** Like all other centralized computing models, CVD requires continuous network connectivity and cannot operate "offline." A host of new technologies are promising to enable access of virtual desktops offline, but these technologies are mainly still in beta use.

Although the preceding limitations seem significant, one must keep in mind that the centralized virtual desktop is an emerging technology that significantly improves as its capabilities continue to expand.

Enabling Centralized Virtual Desktops with VMware View: Understanding the Value

There are three primary platforms through which an organization can deploy an end-to-end CVD architecture. One of these platforms, VMware View, is available from virtualization pioneer VMware. Although VMware View is a new name, it is in reality an evolution of VMware's previous CVD platform, referred to as Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI). As a result, VMware's product offering is far from being in its first iteration. In fact, it has been available through other product names since 2005.

VMware View is available in two editions, Enterprise and Premier. IDC believes that both editions of the platform can provide a very strong base with which to architect a CVD environment, with the latter platform adding features that quickly become valuable as the environment scales.

VMware View Enterprise

The Enterprise version of VMware View is the base offering and includes all of the components necessary to deploy centralized virtual desktops. These components include:

- ☒ **VMware vSphere.** The hypervisor and its embedded services enable multiple unique virtual desktops to be executed by a single piece of hardware. This is the same VMware Virtual Infrastructure that has been used by many organizations to virtualize parts of the datacenter.
- ☒ **VMware vCenter Server.** The platform, formerly named VirtualCenter, allows for the monitoring and management of a virtual environment. vCenter gives administrators control over capabilities such as VMotion, Distributed Resource Scheduler, Fault Tolerance, and High Availability. This is the same vCenter Server that has been used by many organizations to virtualize parts of the datacenter.
- ☒ **VMware View Manager.** This product provides a second level of administrative control specifically as it relates to virtual desktops within the environment. It provides necessary capabilities for the management of a virtual desktop environment such as session management, group policies, and authentication.

In combination, each of the preceding components represents a primary building block necessary for a robust and manageable CVD architecture. From IDC's perspective, the Enterprise edition of VMware View is ideal for those organizations that are either making their first foray into centralized virtual desktops or building an environment that will be used to provide desktops to a limited number of end users.

VMware View Premier

The Premier version of the View platform introduces two new, and in some cases very important, features and a third feature that is equally important but currently available only in experimental mode. The added features in Premier are as follows:

- ☒ **VMware View Composer.** View Composer is an image management technology that works to drastically simplify the software updates and changes made to virtual desktops that are necessary for their continued productivity, such as OS and application patches, application upgrades, and other tasks. Additionally, the View Composer architecture significantly reduces storage requirements by using VMware's linked clone technology to consolidate multiple unique images for each virtual machine down to one shared image.
- ☒ **VMware ThinApp.** ThinApp application virtualization enhances the simplification and scalability provided by View Composer by isolating and separating applications from the OS in the base virtual desktop image. The virtualized application can then be stored on a file server so that it can be streamed into a virtual or physical desktop, enabling the sharing of a single application package by multiple users and simpler management of the application.
- ☒ **VMware Offline Desktop.** Offline Desktop is an experimental-mode technology that enables end users to "check out" personalized virtual desktops running on the CVD environment to a notebook computer for use offline and then "check back in" to the same desktop running in their CVD environment.

Enabling Centralized Virtual Desktops with VMware View: Quantifying the Value

Unquestionably, the use of centralized virtual desktops is optimized in certain use cases where there is a high density of end users needing to uniformly access business applications. In all scenarios, CVD architecture has two primary value propositions:

- ☒ **Improved operational efficiency.** The deployment and maintenance of PCs throughout their life cycle involve a series of steps as outlined at the beginning of this document. The use of centralized virtual desktops can drastically improve the efficiency with which many of the tasks are performed.
- ☒ **Improved control over data and users.** By centralizing the storage and execution, IT can better manage its access, thereby eliminating potential security risks and in some cases more easily complying with government regulations. Centralization of the desktop, and in particular the deployment of thin clients, can also vastly simplify support for geographically distributed end users and contract workers. As one distributed banking firm manager pointed out, "It's actually cheaper now for us to provide a remote user with a virtual desktop and a thin client than to give them a normal client."

To quantify the value associated with the benefits experienced with the particular application of CVD technology using VMware View, IDC interviewed 14 customers, nominated by VMware, to articulate their experiences using the platform. These companies represent the typical virtual desktop user across a range of business sectors and sizes. IDC quantified the value that these organizations have received through the use of VMware View and compared it with the costs of migrating from the traditional desktop model to the centralized virtual environment. The following sections discuss the findings from IDC's research.

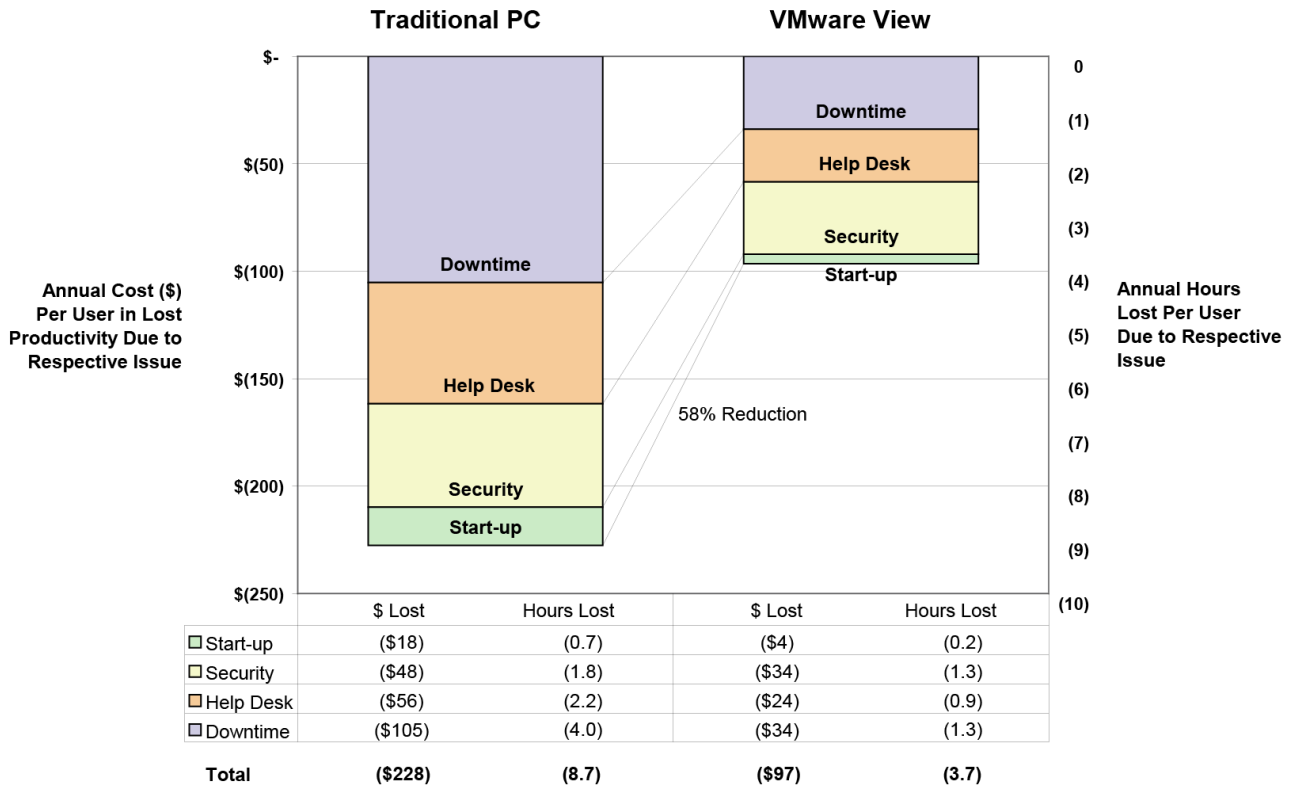
Delivering Desktop Uptime

Although often not taken into consideration in cost analysis done by IT organizations because of their indirect nature, and because the costs do not show up on any balance sheet, employee hours lost due to either the maintenance or the failure of employee PCs certainly impact the business.

Figure 2 presents our findings of the relative loss in employee hours and their respective value in dollars of lost productivity. The analysis presents the employee time and dollars lost due to issues related to PC **downtime** (software and hardware and configuration issues), **help desk** (time to resolve issues), **security** (virus removal and the like), and then the time involved in restoring the client to full operation. The numbers thus represent time consumed, on an annual basis, for the average desktop user because of issues with or maintenance of the user's PC.

FIGURE 2

Differences in Annual Employee Productivity Loss Due to PC Issues: Traditional PC Versus VMware View



Notes:

Calculations assume a professional end user with fully loaded annual compensation at \$50,280.

Model assumes end users remain partially productive (on average 50%) during outage times.

Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

As would be expected, user downtime and time spent dealing with the help desk are reduced by 68% and 57%, respectively. This reduction is largely due to the benefit associated with having desktop software executed on a virtual environment, with its inherent high availability, and, in most cases, the provisioning of a highly fault-tolerant and practically stateless thin-client device with the user. Thin-client devices drastically reduce hardware maintenance issues that spawn help desk calls and user downtime, and centralized virtual desktops are highly available and in the event of a malfunction can be reverted back to working states very speedily and efficiently.

As can be seen, by provisioning centralized virtual desktops with, in many cases, thin-client devices at the edge, organizations can accrue significant soft-dollar savings.

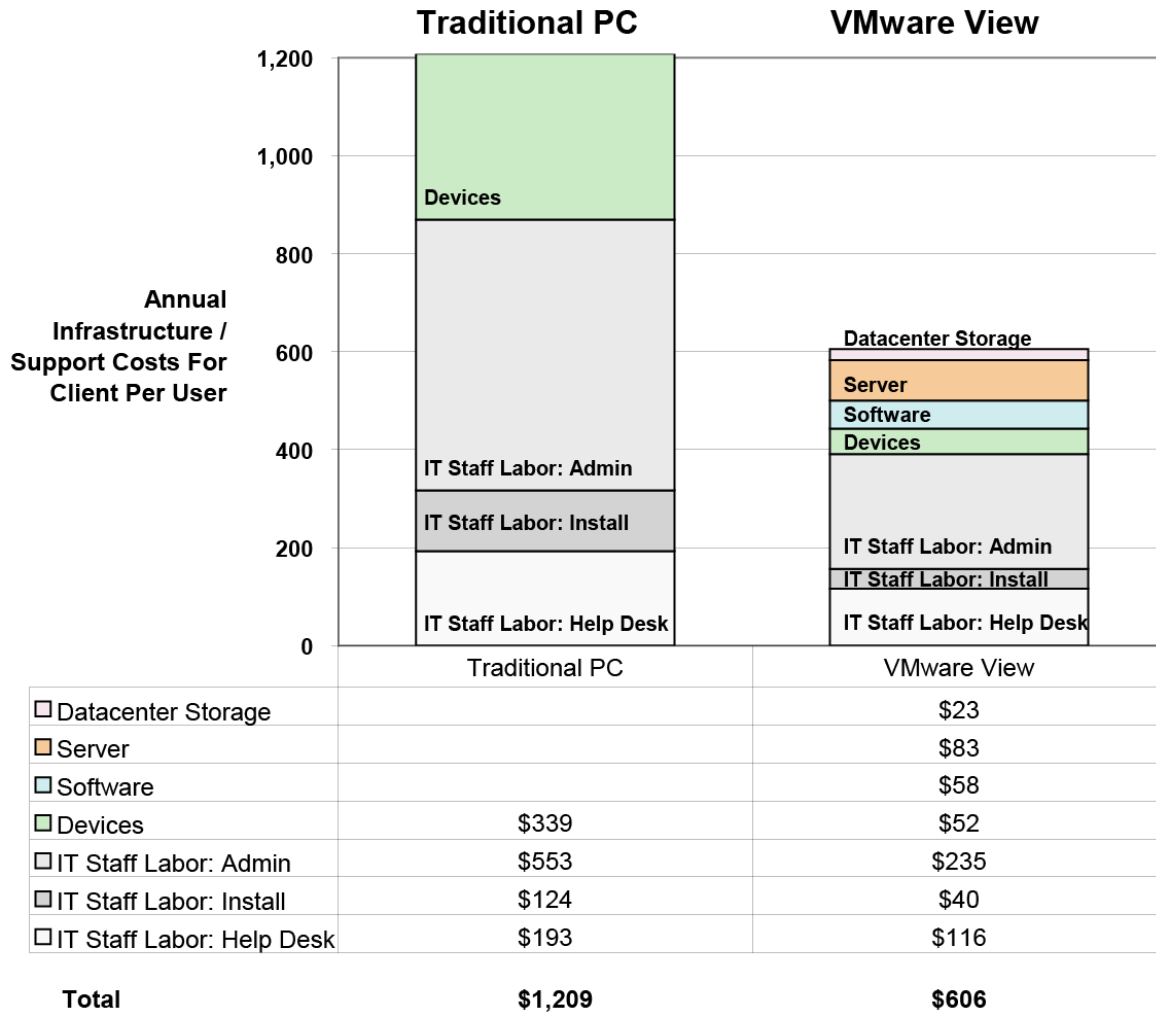
Delivering Lower Platform Costs

The costs for building and maintaining a desktop environment tend to have a much more direct impact on IT budgets than any other IT operation. These costs include not only the entirety of the physical infrastructure but also the payroll costs associated with the human IT resources necessary to maintain and support a desktop environment.

Figure 3 represents a comparison between the annual platform costs for traditional PCs and centralized virtual desktops deployed through the use of VMware View over a five-year period. Note that the consumption of available and existing resources (such as network bandwidth) is not included in this analysis because of the arbitrariness associated with any quantification of these costs and because they are often counterbalanced with savings in comparison with the alternate platform (i.e., bandwidth savings from the elimination of delivering applications and patches to a traditional PC are offset by the bandwidth consumed by a remote display protocol used with a centralized virtual desktop).

FIGURE 3

Differences in Annual PC Infrastructure/Support Costs per User: Traditional PC Versus VMware View



Notes:

Costs represent annual costs averaged over a five-year period.

VMware View sample includes a mix of both Enterprise and Premier implementations.

Server and datacenter storage costs refer to the costs of that hardware devoted to the CVD.

Software refers to the server operating system and virtualization software required to operate the CVD.

Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

Although no direct costs are associated with server, datacenter storage, and software to host a traditional desktop environment, it should be noted that there are indirect costs associated with these technologies. For example, the delivery of applications and the recording of asset inventory and desktop configurations require the use of storage devices, server hardware, and other software. However, for purposes of this comparison, we are assuming that there are limited existing desktop management

tools beyond those inherent within Microsoft Windows client and server platforms. Certainly, depending on the assumptions made, it is clear that there is an incremental cost for these components when deploying centralized virtual desktops because of the network-based storage, server infrastructure, and licensing costs associated with the architecture.

Nevertheless, it is clear from IDC's research findings that savings in IT staff labor and hardware devices are the most important component of ROI, and maximization of these savings is absolutely essential to the cost-effective deployment of centralized virtual desktops. When these savings are not realized, as can occur when the technology is deployed for the wrong purposes or is designed inefficiently, the operational cost savings can be significantly reduced and result in lower, if not negative, ROI.

Reducing the IT staff labor costs normally required to manage desktops accounts for 79% of the cost savings delivered by the CVD environment. Centralizing the desktops in a secure and integrated environment reduces the hours IT staff spend in traditional desktop management by 55%. Table 1 presents a more detailed view of the specific desktop initialization, deployment, configuration management, support, and retirement tasks that respondents indicated are directly affected by the centralized desktop approach. It presents how much less time IT staff needed to spend on each desktop management task category after they implemented the centralized desktop solution.

TABLE 1

VMware View's Effect on Desktop Management and Support Labor Tasks

Desktop Management and Support Task Category	% Less Labor Required for VMware View Versus a Traditional PC Infrastructure
Providing deskside service for end users	94
Desktop imaging/reimaging	85
User administration (i.e., desktop move/add/delete)	68
OS/application patching	65
Hardware configuration	65
Patching, upgrading, and supporting applications	58
Packaging and deploying applications	57
Managing and supporting the desktop images	50
Application testing and provisioning	39
Providing help desk support for end users	32
Security management of data or access	30

Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

All of the data presented in this white paper is representative of the tactical deployment of CVD technology by, in IDC's opinion, sophisticated IT managers. Most of the individuals surveyed have consolidated desktop images and adopted an efficient management model for virtual desktops. As a result, Table 1 shows significant IT labor savings in the area of desktop imaging (85%) and desk-side service (94%). Less dramatic reductions are found in areas such as data management and application testing, which are less affected by the move to a virtual and centralized environment.

The Case for View Premier

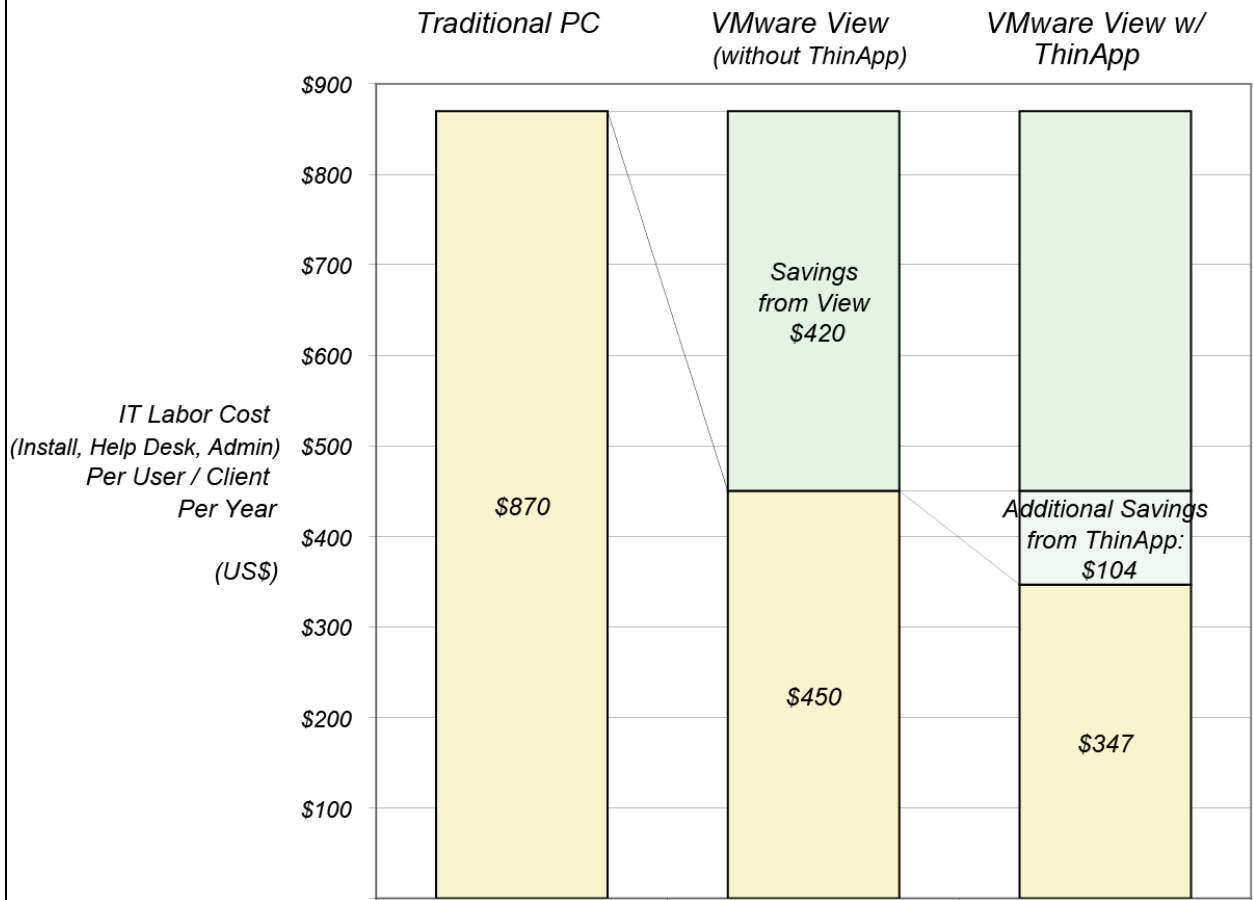
IDC also compared the costs incurred by companies that had deployed the View Premier package (the version of VMware View that includes View Composer and ThinApp) with the costs incurred by companies that had not implemented the View Premier package. The analysis revealed that View Premier delivers major benefits.

Compared with companies that had not deployed View Composer, companies using View Composer reduced datacenter storage costs required to support the CVD architecture by 36%. This reduction in datacenter storage cost translated to a savings of \$18 per year per desktop.

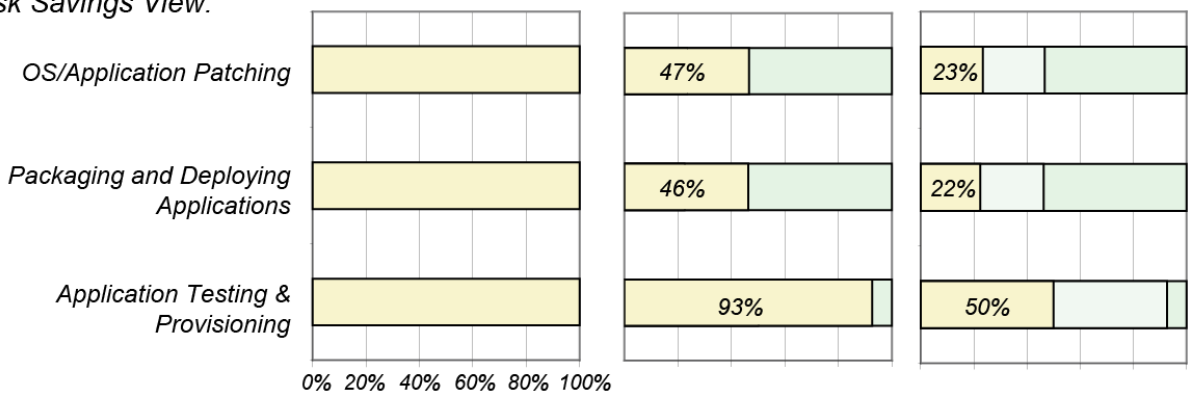
Figure 4 shows that using the ThinApp capabilities significantly increased the automation and control of all tasks associated with application management. As one manager put it, "I don't have to use tools like SMS to deploy the package. I can just get this executable that I've created, put it out on file share, create a link, and everyone has access to it. It gives me some disaster recovery because when I put it in this one location, it replicates out to my DR [disaster recovery] site. So I have that application in DR, without really having to do anything except copy the file." The reduced IT labor costs yield an additional \$104 per desktop annually (19%) in comparison with non-ThinApp implementations.

FIGURE 4

Relative IT Desktop Labor Savings: Traditional PCs, VMware View Without ThinApp, and VMware View with ThinApp



Task Savings View:



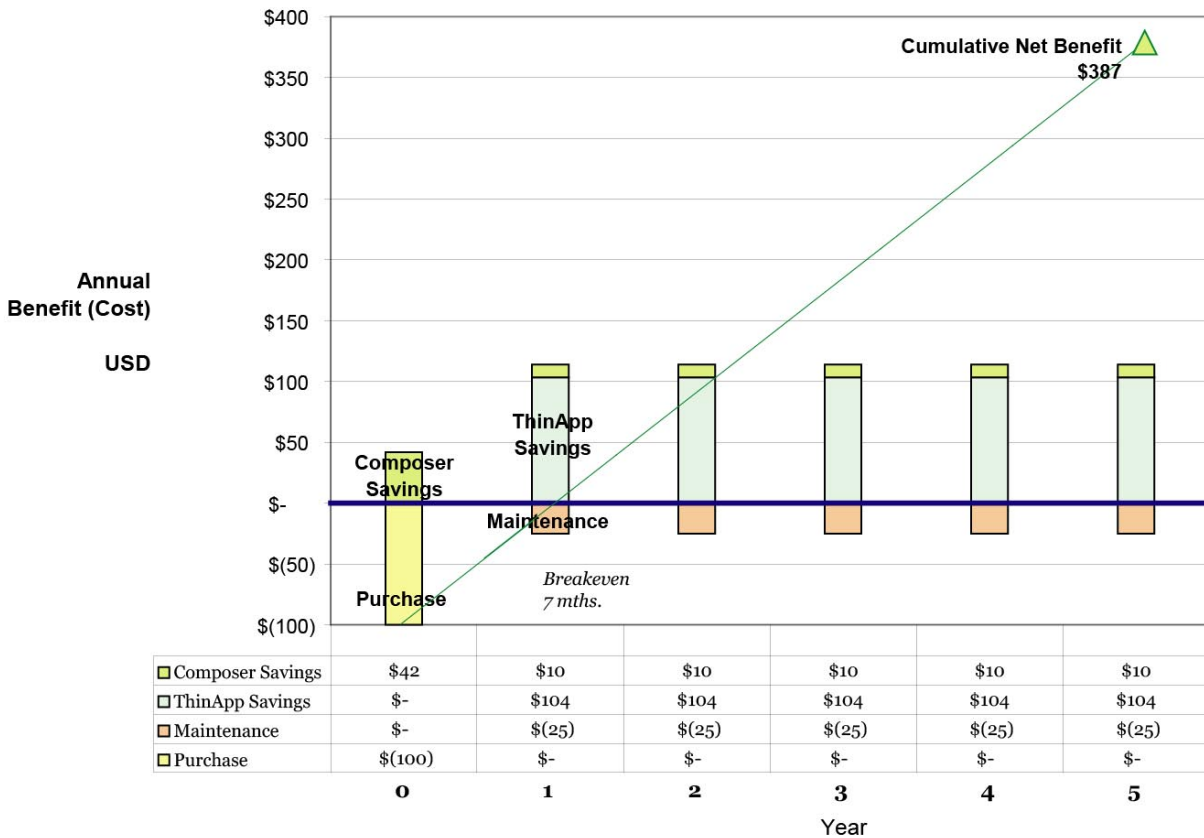
Labor Required for Task
(as a % of Labor Required for this Task Executed on Traditional PCs)

Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

The combination of ThinApp and View Composer in the View Premier package generates a total of \$612 in incremental benefits per desktop over a five-year period. VMware charges a \$100 premium for the package, which in turn increases annual maintenance costs by an additional \$25 for a total five-year cost of \$225. Figure 5 shows that View Premier pays for itself in a little over seven months.

FIGURE 5

View Premier (ThinApp and View Composer) Costs and Benefits per User Pro Forma: Five-Year View



Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

Quantifying the ROI of VMware View

Table 2 represents the estimated ROI per desktop associated with migrating a traditional PC environment to centralized virtual desktops deployed through the use of VMware View for five years. The analysis takes into consideration the cost increases and cost savings associated with the investment as outlined in the preceding figures and discounts those cost savings, or cost increases, by a rate of return that represents the return on capital that could reasonably be anticipated with an alternative investment (opportunity cost).

TABLE 2

Five-Year ROI Analysis of VMware View

Total benefits	\$4,634
Total investment	\$924
Discounted benefits	\$3,322
Discounted investment	\$711
NPV	\$2,612
ROI	367%
Payback	5.61 months
Discount rate	12%
Deployment time	2.74 months

Note: Deployment time refers to the time to deploy once a firm has decided to move ahead with CVD; it does not include time for "proof of concept" or prototyping phases that occur before production deployment.

Source: IDC's Business Value Research, 2009

It should be noted that the preceding ROI analysis represents a collection of assumptions, outlined at the beginning of this white paper, that IDC believes are prudent and provide us with what we believe to be a reasonably accurate measure of a median ROI.

As can be seen in Table 2, the proper tactical applications of CVD technology through the use of VMware View provide IT organizations with a significant return on monies invested. Even more important in today's economic environment, with its limited access to capital, the payback period in which dollars invested are equal to dollars saved is a very short 5.61 months following deployment.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

IDC expects that in the next three to five years, the vast majority of enterprise IT organizations will either have in place extensive proof-of-concept implementations or be deploying CVD in production.

IDC also anticipates that the use of virtualization as an infrastructure used to manage desktop environments will continue to expand in tandem with the growth in the capabilities and maturity of virtual desktop platforms. The preceding ROI analysis of VMware View provides evidence that growth in management capabilities will drive adoption of hypervisors as a desktop management platform. Customers expect this advancement. As one executive put it, "The goal is to have all employees on virtual desktops...but that's the dream. It will take time. We'll wait for technology to catch up

with us." Although there is a strong ROI associated with the use of VMware View Enterprise, the use of View Premier offers equivalently high returns on investment while making the platform more scalable and making it applicable to a larger percentage of end users in the organization.

IDC sees the growth in capabilities of virtual desktop platforms as a two-tier model, with growth coming through evolutionary improvements in CVD platforms such as VMware View and revolutionary improvements taking the form of type-1 hypervisors¹ becoming available for desktop PCs to host virtual desktops at the edge. IDC's understanding of the nature of these changes is noted in the following sections.

The Evolution of Virtual Desktops

Early adopters of CVD technology will continue to provide a proving ground for software vendors that will be investing heavily in what they perceive to be a very high-growth market. An increasing number of CVD platforms will become available within the market, driving competition in pricing as well as products and features. Additionally, smaller vendors that have developed niche products to address certain problems with server-based computing and consolidated image management will continue to be acquired and their products will be integrated into existing CVD platforms, creating more seamless, simple, and comprehensive platforms.

The Revolution of Virtual Desktops

A key innovation that is on the cusp of becoming available is hinted at with the inclusion by VMware of an experimental-mode offline virtual desktop capability. Taking this concept one step further, ISVs in the near future will begin offering bare metal type-1 hypervisors as part of their platform offerings at the same time that PC OEMs will begin offering them as an integrated part of certain PC product lines (much the same way as ESXi is an integrated part of certain server product lines). In IDC's opinion, this is a revolutionary change because it has the ability to transform the way desktops are managed for all users across the entire organization.

The use of client hypervisors will eliminate many of the aforementioned limitations associated with CVD (refer back to the Challenges for Centralized Virtual Desktops section) without sacrificing any of the benefits that organizations experience with the consolidated image and application management and other benefits that are facilitated by that architecture.

¹Type 1 (or native, bare-metal) hypervisors run directly on the host's hardware as a hardware control and monitor that in turn allows "guest" operating system(s) to run on another level above them.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

Because the use of centralized virtual desktops is a fairly new phenomenon, IT organizations will find that testing and proofs of concept take longer and cost more for CVD technology than for many other technologies that they deploy. To maximize ROI on these projects, organizations must have a comprehensive testing phase so that there are no significant surprises when the technology is put into production. Furthermore, there are many potential "gotchas" associated with centralized virtual desktops that can be easy to miss unless the proofs of concept take into consideration all of the variables that exist in the production environment.

To address the complexities associated with the use of CVD architecture, IT organizations should take a conservative approach regarding the setting of expectations with their management teams. This will ensure that projects are not "oversold" and that the reputation of the technology is not hindered if certain objectives are not met.

Additionally, IDC encourages IT management to consider hiring services organizations that have built practices specifically around the planning and implementation of virtualization environments, in addition to other server-based computing environments such as Microsoft's Terminal Services.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of customers deploying centralized virtual desktops enabled with the VMware View platform in production clearly shows that IT organizations can expect to yield significant value when deploying the technology appropriately. Because CVD leverages the benefits associated with a flexible foundation, made possible through hypervisors, IT organizations can begin to manage users and desktop use cases that typically were difficult to control before the advent of centralized virtual desktops.

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