

NetMan Desktop Manager

Case Study



Schneider & Partner GbR

H+H NetMan Desktop Manager Makes Tax Accounting Software Easier to Use

Getting a Handle on Complex Business & Finance Software

Schneider & Partner is an accounting and auditing partnership in Landau that offers comprehensive tax planning, auditing and accounting services. Their clients include medium-sized companies and health care service providers. In tandem with the growth of the firm, the IT infrastructure at Schneider & Partner has expanded steadily over the years. In 1999, they replaced their aging client/server system with a terminal server installation, which at the time was cutting-edge technology. "Three servers are far easier to manage than 50 PCs," is how Frederik Schneider sums up the advantages of a terminal server system. Among his other responsibilities at the company, Schneider oversees the operation and administration of all computer installations for Schneider & Partner. "Moreover, thanks to terminal server technology, our telecommuters have remote access to the programs they need," he added.



Frederik Schneider of Schneider & Partner in the server room with Kai Bosch of VNS

The terminal server solution was reliable and efficient for a number of years. Demands on the system increased considerably, however, primarily due to the growing requirements of the specialized accounting software from Schleupen AG that Schneider & Partner uses, and in the end the terminal server solution reached the limit of its performance capability. In mid-2007, Schneider & Partner began looking into possibilities for modernizing the entire IT setup. They contacted VNS-EDV Management GmbH, a local IT service provider in Landau. Bernd Niestroj, managing director of VNS EDV-Management GmbH, reports: "Since Schneider & Partner had been using terminal servers for so long without any complaints, it was clear to us from the outset that they could continue to rely on this technology. Our goal was to offer a cost-efficient alternative to their previous solution without sacrificing efficiency."

Cost Comparison Shows NetMan Desktop Manager Is the Best Option

As a partner of H+H Software GmbH, VNS distributes the NetMan Desktop Manager terminal server solution (NDM) from H+H, which features quick and easy delivery of applications. "The NDM system meets all the needs of an accounting firm," says Niestroj. "We have had nothing but positive experiences with NDM. The value for money it offers, combined with the per-seat licensing scheme, make it especially well-suited to the requirements of a medium-sized company." A rapid decision in favor of NDM was made even easier by the fact that a comparable terminal server software solution from the competition would have cost seven times as much. Testing was completed by late summer of 2007 and Frederik Schneider, assisted by VNS, installed NetMan Desktop Manager and used it to deploy the company's applications on the physical and virtual terminal servers. The additional installation of sophisticated accounting software from Schleupen AG posed no problem. "NDM is very easy to manage," says Schneider, well pleased with the solution. "We really don't even need the manual. Just a few clicks are all that's necessary to distribute all our applications, including our customized configuration of access privileges. The programs were available right away on every workstation."



Bernd Niestroj, VNS

Thanks to NDM, nothing has changed for the 40 employees who use computers. All their shortcuts appear as usual on the desktop and in the Start menu. Separate authentication in the NetMan system is not necessary, because NDM can use the existing Windows login data. "With NDM, our employees can open programs by double-clicking on the desired file. This wasn't nearly as simple with the older Citrix-based platform," says Schneider. This feature is made possible by NetMan's content redirection function.

Another important factor in choosing NetMan Desktop Manager was NDM's license management program. Comprehensive license monitoring shows administrators where additional software licenses may be needed, and where the firm might cut back on user licenses. "This is an effective way to minimize costs, especially through tracking the more expensive applications like DATEV and the Schleupen software," Schneider points out.

Complete Confidence in Terminal Server Technology

Network Desktop Manager was so easy to install and operate that Schneider & Partner decided to use it for enterprise-wide distribution of applications after just a few days of testing. Because the trial version does not differ functionally from the full version, a renewed installation was not necessary. Since then, the system has been up and running for about six months with no appreciable difficulties.

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The reliability of their terminal server systems has led Schneider & Partner to replace increasing numbers of expensive and error-prone PCs with thin clients. A thin client requires only a rudimentary operating system, and is essentially an output device; all processing is handled

by central terminal servers. The advantages of thin clients include their compact size, low noise, low power consumption and, not least of all, their economical purchase price. In the event of failures, too, thin clients are superior



Schneider & Partner GbR tax consultancy

to PCs, because they are easily interchangeable. One thin client can be replaced by another with no application installation, and hardly any interruption of the user's work. Furthermore, there is no risk of data loss. Currently half of the workstations at Schneider & Partner use thin clients, and all new acquisitions in this area are thin clients as well.

Server Virtualization Is Easy on the Budget

One prerequisite for integration of an efficient new IT solution was the implementation of an up-to-date hardware server. It was in this context that Frederik Schneider introduced the concept of server virtualization.

"The technology sounded very promising, so we wanted to discuss the issue with VNS," explains Schneider. Bernd Niestroj adds: "For us, the use of virtualization in conjunction with tax accounting software was at that time still new territory. But together with Schneider & Partner we tackled the subject. The costs entailed, too, spoke unambiguously for the virtualization solution." In the end, they decided to go with the ESX Server from VMware. A total of 6 virtual servers were installed by VNS on a high-capacity server. "Small and medium-sized companies are very sensitive with regard to expenses," comments Bernd Niestroj. "With virtualization, we were able to kill two birds with one stone", adds Frederik Schneider. "We have saved significantly on expenses while at the same time benefiting from enhanced performance."

Summary: A Model for Tax Accounting Firms

The IT system installed in a tax consulting firm must support complex tax accounting software applications. The integration at Schneider & Partner was a big challenge, and one that turned out well for everyone involved. "Of course there was a certain learning curve for us as well. But the pay-off is that now we know we can offer functional solutions for tax consulting firms," summarizes Niestroj.

About Schneider & Partner GbR

Schneider & Partner GbR tax consultancy in Landau was founded in the 1930s, and have operated in their current form since the 1960s. The services offered by this partnership include payroll and financial accounting as well as auditing. A staff of about 40 attend the interests of the firm's clientele, who are primarily made up of medium-sized businesses and other companies in the health service sector.

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About VNS EDV-Management GmbH

VNS is a Landau-based IT systems provider offering services in all areas of IT since 1998. Their customers include tax consultants, attorneys, auditors, trades businesses, doctors and pharmacies as well as public and social welfare offices. The services offered by VNS encompasses technologically and commercially customized comprehensive solutions, including hardware, software, service and consultation. In particular in the areas of terminal server technology and the integration of complex financial applications and tax consultancy software, VNS has over the years earned a very good reputation.

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About H+H Software GmbH

H+H Software GmbH, founded in 1989, is a systems and software manufacturer located in Göttingen. The company's core business includes consulting and the development and marketing of application, license and network management solutions. H+H is one of only 350 Microsoft Gold Certified Partners in Germany. H+H Software's clientele is mainly composed of large and medium-sized companies, universities, government agencies, libraries and schools. But H+H also serves individual users with the stand-alone version of its popular CD and DVD emulator, Virtual CD. The company's products include H+H NetMan, NetMan Desktop Manager, Virtual CD and HAN, the Hidden Automatic Navigator. H+H also offers an optimized NetMan version for educational use, NetMan for Schools.

For more information, visit www.hh-software.com.

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