



Consumerisation of IT

This week, Citrix held a roundtable discussion to debate the impact of consumerisation on enterprise IT. Fraser Kyne hosted Ian Pratt, vice president of advanced products at Citrix and chairman of Xen.org, and Martin Kelly, vice president of global IT service delivery at Citrix.

Gartner has reported that it considers the consumerisation of IT to be the single most influential trend affecting technology decision makers in the coming decade. This intimate event attended by 11 senior IT executives gave the group the opportunity to discuss today's reality of the trend and share best practice and thinking.

Mind the gap

Mark Templeton, CEO and president, at Citrix has been speaking about the consumerisation of IT for the past 18-24 months. He believes consumerisation will force more IT change over the next 10 years than any other trend. Our experience as consumers using simple online self-service applications on our own PCs at home is a better than we typically have with complex IT services at work. The gap between the simplicity and usability of the consumer and enterprise computing experience is growing, as is user dissatisfaction with enterprise IT systems. In addition, younger, media-savvy works who expect leading-edge computing services are entering the workforce, bringing with them high expectations for computing. These factors put increasing pressure on IT to change.

It's clear no one has all the answers and everyone around the table was at different levels of progress with their own consumerisation programmes, especially with bring-your-own or buy-your-own computer initiatives. It was agreed that macro trends are making an impact with businesses looking to centralize their IT resources for efficiency, security and agility reasons, while people – whether employees, contractors or customers – are increasingly becoming decentralized.

What we do know is that five years ago, IT departments could say no to end-user driven devices. But today's landscape is changing dramatically. IT has two choices, either embrace the consumerisation of IT or bury its head in the sand. The latter option will ultimately be more painful. Everyone around the table has received requests for the use of iPads or similar within their organization, employees WANT to use these devices and adoption is accelerating quickly. Only 80 days after the launch, Apple had sold 3 million iPads and analyst firm RBC Capital Markets estimates worldwide sales will top 8 million by the end of the year.

Client-side virtualisation

While the focus of the day wasn't on technology per se, in the context of looking ahead to 2012 – 2013 Ian Pratt kicked off the presentation element of the discussion with an overview of common user categories and needs, the range of desktop delivery methods across server-side and client-side computing and how true type-1 hypervisors work.

Client-side hypervisors are a new technology, and while not immediately relevant to BYOC programmes, still do add an interesting element to consumerisation considering they allow a personal and enterprise desktop to sit on the



same device in isolated virtual machines. Ian believes we are likely to see client hypervisors build in to consumer devices by 2012-2013

Importantly, Ian outlined the clear differences in security between type 1 and type 2 hypervisors given the latter cannot protect corporate data from being exploited if the host VM is compromised. The aim of XenClient, Citrix's type 1 hypervisor, is to provide our customers with the same control over data as when it is stored in the datacenter but enable it to be stored on a laptop while maintaining fully centralized management.

Bring or Buy Your Own Computer conundrums

During introductions around the table, it was clear that the focus on consumerisation and the more specific trend of BYOC programmes are part of broader business transformation projects and not just an IT issue. The opportunity to discuss progress and concerns openly proved fruitful with many numerous and varied considerations and drivers coming to light, including:

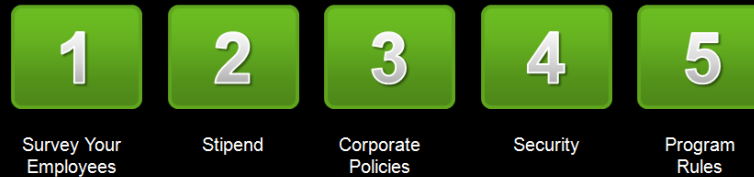
- Desktop refresh – driven by Windows 7, the impact of consumerisation, innovation and cost reduction within the business
- Choice – lots of options for delivering desktops spanning hosted VM-based desktops, hosted shared-desktops and whether to deliver to managed or personal devices
- Demographic of workforce – average age of employees is typically falling and yet, the older 'learn digital' generation are working longer too so balancing their needs is challenging
- Balancing needs of the business and users – what is in it for the user? And what is in it for the business?
- Return on Investment – at what point will the business see ROI? Should this be a cost-driven exercise? Is now the right time for considering such initiatives? What are the hard benefits? Equally though, it was debated as to whether it should all be about cost savings or more about building an agile business?
- Process – how should a BYOC programme be managed? What are the required legal and HR processes? What are the tax implications?

Ultimately, delivering desktop as a service and meeting the user requirements while managing budget and efficiency targets are key. It was agreed that desktop as a service is about immediate consumption, being able to deliver what's needed – either by the business or the user – now, not waiting 6 months in order to be able to support new devices. At Citrix, we know that whichever approach is needed, the technologies are available to deliver the desktops. It's resolving the business and procedural issues that are key.

Martin Kelly, responsible for global IT service delivery at Citrix, shared our rationale for BYOC, the five main steps Citrix took to developing the programme and insight into lessons learnt.



Creating a BYOC program



The initial survey encouraged the programme from a user and IT point of view. For example, it found that users were happy to take on the responsibility of a self-service approach because:

- It provides greater choice than has been traditionally offered by IT
- They believe they would be more productive and happier

Meanwhile, the global IT teams were confident about the idea because:

- It reduces the dependency on IT to procure and manage laptops
- It saves time and expense
- It keeps things simple and can be provided as a self-service initiative

Martin shared various insights and lessons learnt throughout the process including: how to make the stipend attractive to the employee and to provide a cost saving to the business; understanding tax rules with regards to the stipend; how to put qualification processes in place; managing budget given the laptop refresh 'pot' sits with management not IT; minimum specification for devices; and how to work with legal and HR teams and managers to educate about the process.

We all debated the difference between a Bring-your-own device and a Buy-your-own device scheme but agreed that it hadn't been fully defined. Interestingly, the analogy of a company car allowance versus company car scheme was used as a reference point with musings on whether it started off with the same complexities given how common place and widely accepted it is today.

Ultimately, users simply want to be able to access their desktop quickly. If their user experience isn't impacted, where the desktop resides or how it is delivered is irrelevant. And while the entire morning's content was delivered via a virtualized desktop delivered to a XenClient laptop, an iPad and an iPhone, the best demonstration of a



virtualized desktop is actually the most boring one you'll ever see – because it should look and feel just like your traditional desktop! In the same way that the best IT team is invisible, so is the best desktop delivery model.

Work with anyone from anywhere

Each business has different needs and aspirations, whether it is device and network independence, developing a 'bring your own' scheme or providing self-service user experiences. The consistent theme is that it is vital to ensure a better environment for people and IT to work together, enabling work and play from anywhere at any time.

The power of inertia is one of the strongest and most damaging forces threatening the development of IT today. Continuing down the path of least resistance, because 'it's the way we've always done things', may well be easier. However, a creative approach to connectivity that gives unlimited capability to collaborate and communicate, will — without a doubt — deliver strategic advantage.

Will the challenge of overcoming the power of inertia be easy? No.

Will it be necessary? Yes.

Will it be worthwhile? Definitely.

Get in touch

For more information on any of the topics above or to discuss how your organisation can start the process of further embracing virtual computing, please contact execprogramme@citrix.com