



Premier League employees score better mobility with VMware Horizon View

INDUSTRY

Sport

KEY CHALLENGES

- The Premier League's IT team is focused on improving the business operationally by enhancing its users' working experience
- It needed a solution that could support mobile working for staff, while providing even better performance than the current desktop estate

RESULTS

- All staff from across the Premier League can now access their own personal desktop and applications no matter where in the country they are – simply by logging in with their own credentials
- All applications can be accessed from any device in a safe and secure manner

In moving to a virtualised desktop environment with VMware Horizon View, the Premier League has increased staff mobility – both supporting bring your own device (BYOD) initiatives and giving users the option to access corporate information in the way that suits them best - and from any location.

The Barclays Premier League is the most watched continuous annual global sporting event in the world. Last season 13.9 million fans attended matches with record average stadium occupancy of 95.9%. Across nine months of the year, 380 matches are viewed in 175 countries with coverage available in over 650 million households.

The quality of Premier League football and the interest that it generates allows the organisation to support all areas of the sport. This season it will invest in more than 50 new artificial grass roots pitches in communities across the UK and deliver hundreds of projects that focus on improving sports coaching in schools and inspiring young people to play sport. The financial investment in this important area of its work will be £56m.

On top of this, the Premier League also invests in the Football League, the Football Conference and other football bodies. Premier League football provides in excess of £1.3bn per season to the UK Government in tax revenue.

Challenges to be tackled

With the Premier league in such a prominent position in the world of football, its IT team is continually looking for ways to improve the business operationally by enhancing its users' working experience. It takes pride in ensuring staff have the latest technology, and updates all applications and operating systems to the newest versions before the season starts each summer, with physical hardware also being regularly upgraded. Whilst the majority of staff are based in the head office, remote working and workforce mobility has become increasingly important to the business.

"We're quickly moving to a business

landscape where staff want the option to work remotely without having to necessarily carry their laptop or other various devices with them wherever they go," said Simon Thunder, Head of IT at the Premier League. "This means having access to the same applications and files that they would in the office, but through their own personal devices or remotely on their work devices. We believe this offers another level of "Value Add" to the staff, enabling them to work in environments that were not previously possible. We have received some great feedback from end users and the service plays an important role in our delivery of one of the key strands of our current IT Strategy – Access anytime, any device, anywhere."

Matching needs

To create a more flexible desktop environment, the Premier League approached SITS Group - VMware EUC Partner of the Year - for a solution that could help to improve its end user experience and create a secure, mobilised environment around its desktop estate. SITS Group works closely with IT teams in organisations of all sizes to change the way they deliver IT infrastructures to generate business advantage.

"We turned to SITS Group for a solution as we knew they'd won awards for their approach in helping companies get the most from their End User Computing (EUC) investments," adds Thunder. "They know the capabilities of the software on

VMWARE CASE STUDY

“We take pride in equipping all staff with the latest and best technology to do their jobs in the most effective way possible. VMware Horizon View has enabled us to deliver flexible working and mobility for all staff, giving them access to the same applications and information as they have in the office, but from anywhere, on any device, as and when they may need to use them.”

Simon Thunder,
Head of IT at the Premier League

PRODUCTS

- VMware Horizon View

the market but more importantly they understood our business requirements.”

The Premier League wanted a solution that could create a more mobile, end-user-focused environment, while maintaining the same high level of functionality and performance they already had throughout their estate. After evaluating the Premier League’s situation, SITS Group decided that VMware’s Horizon View VDI solution would be the best way of increasing mobility, enhancing desktop performance and ultimately enabling staff to become more productive.

“One of the main requirements we had to address the Premier League’s EUC needs was to find a solution that could support mobile working for staff, while having better or similar performance than the current desktop estate,” comments Phil Cambers, Co-Founder, SITS Group. “In some companies, that wouldn’t be such a difficult task as the desktop environment could be as much as five years old, but in the Premier League, staff are using the latest, most up-to-date software and hardware. We therefore needed to find a secure and robust solution that gave staff remote access to all their systems and applications, yet also guaranteed they still had the high level of desktop service they had become accustomed to. Based on the above conditions, we created a virtual desktop solution that used VMware Horizon View as the broker, Atlantis ILIO to deliver top performance and NVidia GPUs to deliver rich media content including HD video.”

Premier performance

As VMware Horizon View creates a virtual desktop that’s separated from the physical hardware, all staff from across the Premier League can now access their own personal desktop and applications – anything from HR systems, to Finance databases from any PC or device, no matter where in the country they are – simply by logging in with their own credentials. “The new virtualised desktop environment means that staff can connect to their desktops through the Internet to the network as if they were in the office,” adds Thunder. “It means they can use their own devices with the same functionality as their work laptops. Whatever they may need access for;

they now have it easily thanks to Horizon View.”

“The feedback from staff has been excellent – they’re used to having the latest and best technology available, but Horizon View now means they also have access to everything they need to do their jobs in the most convenient way. We’re always looking to use IT in innovative ways to improve the way our business operates. Giving staff access to their desktops from any device not only means we’re giving them the ability to work more effectively, but we can continue to provide the best technology available to them.”

SITS GROUP

SITS Group are a multi award winning virtualisation consultancy practice, delivering high quality cloud solutions for a range of public and private sector clients. Quality, dedication, professionalism and focus are key values which have helped SITS Group become such a success.

