



Case Study | Parallels Remote Application Server

Orchestr8 Chooses Parallels RAS to Replace Citrix

Orchestr8 chose Parallels Remote Application Server over Citrix Presentation Server 4.5 to securely deliver business applications over remote networks at an affordable price. While a simplified management system and reliable performance were an added benefit, reduced licensing cost has been the biggest coup for the company.

Company Overview

Orchestr8 (<http://www.orchestr8.com/>) is a leading provider of SaaS-based supply chain management tools. Established in 2002 and headquartered in UK, the company has quickly evolved into a one-stop shop for demand-driven lean supply chain strategic solutions. Backed by several years of supply chain consultancy experience and empowered by a team of European professionals, the company offers world-class IT solutions for inventory management systems. The company's blue chip clients include Heinz and Avon, 3M, Modus Link and PZ Cussons.

The Challenge

Orchestr8 developed a custom browser based upon the IE11 rendering engine that only allows users to 1 site and which can inject JavaScript into any page to be able to take a server-side screenshot. Along with this personalized application, the company required other applications and desktops to be published to remote users. Orchestr8 earlier used Citrix Presentation Server 4.5. The application delivery infrastructure included 2 HP DL360 servers, 2 Citrix Presentation Server licenses with corresponding Windows server 2003 licenses and remote desktop CALS.

The initial network was configured on 32-bit windows. However, the company found that they either needed to add other servers or move to 64-bit servers. Additionally, Citrix Presentation Server 4.5 was complex to setup on 64-bit servers, and a Citrix consultant was required to perform the setup.

Nonetheless, the Citrix technical support team was sometimes swift to answer; while on other occasions, for example, when issues were more complex and required a request for development status updates on the RFD, it was nonexistent. There were also inconsistencies between different clients.

For instance, the Mac client allows you to connect to the same gateway with multiple usernames while the Windows client does not; the Mac client allows you to edit connection properties if the user is attached to a policy while the windows client does not. In addition to these challenges, Orchestr8 was advised to reduce bandwidth to its clients. Furthermore, the licensing costs for Citrix solutions were higher. Consequently, the company started looking for a cost-effective alternative.

"Parallels Remote Application Server has been the most reliable component within the whole system. It has never failed to do its job. The main driving factor was the cost of licensing, with Parallels Remote Application Server being considerably cheaper for concurrent users than Citrix."

Stuart Watton, Systems Manager at Orchestr8

The Solution

Orchestr8 chose Parallels Remote Application Server because it perfectly answered its requirements. It (Parallels Remote Application Server) was easy to deploy and manage while being cost-effective at the same time. Windows remote desktop services was configured and there is no VDI. Server Load Balancing, Application Publishing and Parallels Remote Application Server portal are the important components used by the company.

Nonetheless, the initial challenge was understanding how all the components of Parallels Remote Application Server hang together, what parts needed to be where within the firewall (DMZ, Internal etc) and what ports each component needed to communicate with other components within the system. Once this was fully understood, and the firewall configured, the rest of the setup/configuration was relatively simple.

Key Benefits

Orchestr8 has quickly realized that the infrastructure maintenance is vastly simplified. Upgrading to a new version is as simple as running a new install on the primary Publishing agent server and then rolling out the updates to other agents from the Remote Application Server console. Publishing a new application is a simple process of following a wizard.

Moreover, Parallels Remote Application Server is reliable and rarely failed. Additionally, while working with unreliable Internet connections, Parallels Remote Application Server is able to seamlessly reconnect to dropped sessions, which was not possible with Citrix Presentation Server 4.5.

However, while efficiency improvement is a side benefit, the main driving factor was the cost of licensing, with Parallels Remote Application Server being considerably cheaper for concurrent users when compared against Citrix. Orchestr8 also finds the built-in load balancer particularly useful as it is simple to reconfigure its requirements at any time.

Furthermore, Orchestr8 is likely to see a significant expansion over the next few years and it believes it cannot see the business being able to scale up to cope with this, without the reliability, simplicity and ease of installation of Parallels Remote Application Server, especially at the clients' end.

About Orchestr8

Orchestr8 is a UK-based company that provides world-class inventory management solutions to businesses of all sizes. The company has transformed its decades of supply chain consultancy expertise into SaaS-based IT solutions which have ensured the highest level of customer service with minimal cost for businesses.

The company serves leading blue chip clients as well as several small and medium businesses. Orchestr8 offers a range of services including Supply Chain Planning Software, Supply Chain Consulting and Outsourcing of S&OP processes. For more information, visit <http://www.orchestr8.com/>.

About Parallels

Parallels is a leading provider of cross-platform solutions. The company was founded in 1999 and began operations in 2000. The company quickly evolved into a global leader in cross-platform solutions, with offices in 15 countries including the US, UK, Germany, France, Japan, China, and Ukraine. The head office is located in Bellevue, Washington, and there are more than 1,000 employees worldwide. Parallels makes it easy for users to access resources from any device, any platform, anytime and from anywhere.

Parallels Remote Application Server (RAS) is a powerful virtualization product from Parallels. It was originally developed by 2X Software. After acquiring 2X Software in 2015, Remote Application Server joined the Parallels product portfolio. Parallels RAS is a comprehensive virtualization software that seamlessly delivers applications and virtual desktops to any device, anytime and from anywhere. It is easy to install and use. The product comes with all major virtualization features packed into a single package. Features such as printing redirection and load balancing come auto-configured by default. Most importantly, Parallels RAS is cost-effective. To learn more about Parallels RAS, visit parallels.com.