

Phoenix Thin Client

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Newburn Consulting
White Paper on
Thin Client Benefits



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Benefits of thin-client networking:

Lower support and distribution costs.

Since the applications mostly run on servers, there are fewer machines to configure. Support costs are lowered since there is more consistency across implementations. Software costs may be reduced, e.g. for a network of 100 thin-client machines, customers can buy 75% of application licenses since some licenses count on concurrent use of the software. This can reduce the cost of the application software compared to installation on 100 standalone PCs.

Interface portability.

User profiles and interface specifications can be maintained via a server process. This means that as the end user logs onto the system, his or her interface profile is downloaded in real time. The implication is that the user's personal interface is now available from any piece of hardware.

Faster Mean Time To Repair (MTTR).

Today, the failure of desktop hardware can be catastrophic to the individual user. While some files may be kept on a corporate or departmental server; many of them are stored locally. These must be recovered before the user can continue to work. In the worst case, the entire local station may have to be rebuilt, reconfigured and restored. This is not the case in a thin-client network. All personal files can be kept on back-office servers. In the event of an end-user machine failure, simply replace the old machine with a new one, log on and continue to work. This reduced MTTR also implies a lower cost of outage when these failures occur.

Capacity planning.

Networkers will be able to perform better capacity planning in a thin-client environment. It will be possible to measure and evaluate the actual work being performed. This data may be plotted so that trends can be predicted. Since the desktop hardware/software environment will become more stable, most of the planning will now be for the back-office engines and the network to deliver the presentation information. For example, information about the number of concurrent users, the applications being used, the duration of time spent in each application, and the disk space utilization can all be measured on a daily basis. Over time, as usage increases, network managers will be able to predict the capacity that they will require to handle projected loads. As a side benefit, the fact that the same application (say, a word processor) does not have to be duplicated on every machine should reduce over-capacity requirements – which is to say, better utilization of existing equipment. Upgrade of the network can be done on the Server only instead of every individual workstation.

Cost reduction.

There may not necessarily be an immediate saving on the initial purchase cost for a small network environment, but customers will save on ongoing maintenance, along with the added benefits outlined above.