Rocket

BerkOne

BerkOne saves approximately 50% in terminal emulation costs while reducing upgrade times by 80%

Industry
Business process automation for tax collection and other financial/IT services

Challenge
- Reduce cost of terminal emulation
- Improve overall user functionality and ease of use for critical business processes
- Streamline manual upgrade processes

Results
- Significant cost savings of approximately 50%
- Reduced deployment times by up to 80%
- Redeployed company resources to help deliver new customer initiatives

Products
Rocket® BlueZone® Terminal Emulation

Application
Remote access and support

Company

BerkOne is a systems solutions provider/software value-added reseller (VAR) and high-volume transaction processing company with more than 80 years of experience as an IT-based service bureau. Serving over 300 organizations around the world, BerkOne's multi-faceted organization provides turnkey software for business process automation, as well as scanning and lockbox services, personalized business form printing and mailing, sophisticated clerical support, and physical records management.

BerkOne began business as the IT department for the H.A. Berkheimer company. In the 1980s, Berkheimer made major investments in information technology to modernize tax collection processes and was an early adopter of imaging and data base technology. Berkheimer first entered the service bureau business in the 1990s and spun out BerkOne as a separate company in 2003.

Challenge

BerkOne's philosophy is to continually look for new efficiencies to improve competitive advantage. In examining ways to more effectively support their users, BerkOne saw an opportunity to reduce the costs of its current terminal emulator by replacing it with an emulator that offered greater functionality and was easier to deploy.

Richard Smith, BerkOne's Technical Support Manager, runs a team that provides hardware, software, networks and security to all parts of the company. Some departments rely on terminal emulation for different applications and usage cases, spanning approximately 325+ users to support the following functions:

- Earned Income Tax (accessing tax records)
- Delinquent Tax (requires the most scripting, usage of macros)
- Collections (similar to delinquent)
- Collateral Management (vehicle title lookups)

As Smith began exploring different emulation products, he documented several key requirements for the winning solution: ease of installation and upgrades, flexible licensing, and a competitive price point.

Ease of deployment was critical as Smith's technicians had come to dread upgrades. Prior to deploying Rocket, the team updated every machine manually, taking hours and pulling resources away from more strategic pursuits. "Not only was this a hardship for the technical staff but end users were affected as well. We had to coordinate each upgrade at a time convenient per user. Some were performed after hours but some took valuable production hours away from staff. It wasn't an ideal scenario," notes Smith.

Solution

Initially, BerkOne experimented with an open source replacement solution, but after discovering that its functionality did not fully support BerkOne's requirements, Smith started to look at other vendors. A member of the support team was familiar with Rocket's BlueZone Terminal Emulation from a previous company and downloaded the free trial. After putting Rocket through its paces, Smith and his team determined that Rocket provided all required functionality and security at a significantly lower price point.

The deployment took approximately five months as the team brought each department online one by one, providing training as needed. The Delinquent Tax department implementation proved to be the most challenging as users relied the most on function keys and various macros. The IT team worked with Rocket to address the macro conversion, ultimately successfully migrating all macros to BlueZone.

"Throughout the entire testing process, Rocket's support team was incredibly responsive," stated Kristen Dougherty, Director of IT. "They willingly managed our requests for the customized requirements our specific environment demanded. We weren't sure if this level of response would continue once we were up and running but we've been pleasantly surprised. And, we've had very few tickets overall." By offering a concurrent, subscription-based license, BerkOne realized an even greater cost savings than was initially anticipated.

Results

Smith calculates BerkOne will save approximately 48% over five years versus the cost of maintaining the incumbent solution. "The economics look favorable and we appear to be on track to achieve our pro forma cost benefit," states Dougherty. Equally important, Smith estimates they've reduced upgrade times by as much as 80%. The team used to have to touch every user's machine. With 325+ users each requiring one hour per machine, the team spent 325 hours on upgrades alone.

With Rocket, Smith's team scripted all upgrades and one member of the support team can push out all updates to the various users in a matter of minutes. "Now, upgrades are easy," noted Smith, "and we've been able to redeploy our newfound productivity on more strategic initiatives that help our customers achieve their business goals."

Throughout the roll-out, Smith maintained constant communication with his users to ensure they didn't see any change in functionality that could potentially disrupt day-to-day operations. Six months after the deployment, Smith went back again to the users asking for input, and received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

"I personally find it much better than the previous solution–it's easier and faster for my staff," stated the Manager of the BerkOne Collateral Management Department. A manager in the Delinquent Tax Department noted that "Rocket® BlueZone® Terminal Emulation has more options to personalize the fonts and colors which I really like."

> " *As a value-added reseller (VAR), we are on the 'client end' of these distribution chains," said Richard Smith, BerkOne's Technical Support Manager. "Our purpose is to implement software in client specific solutions and Rocket® BlueZone® Terminal Emulation enables us to do that successfully in every situation we've encountered.* "

Rocket.

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