



CUSTOMER STORY

Brent is a place of contrasts and a destination for thousands of British and international visitors every year. Home of the iconic Wembley Stadium, the world famous Wembley Arena, the new London Designer Outlet and the spectacular Swaminarayan Hindu Temple, it provides a stage for cultural, sporting and religious events of national and international importance.

The majority of Brent employees are based in the award winning Civic Centre, which has won numerous awards and is officially the greenest public building in the UK.

Over recent years, Brent Council has undergone major transformation, and this continues with a programme of unprecedented structural and organisational change designed to meet the financial challenges facing the public sector. They remain committed however to deliver high quality services while driving efficiency and cutting waste and bureaucracy and to driving forward service excellence, urban regeneration and community cohesion whilst recognising that they cannot ignore the financial reality of providing public services in this challenging financial climate.

Desktop Virtualisation Made Simple



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- Stewart Hall, Head of Infrastructure

THE CHALLENGE

Brent Borough Council was looking to refresh XP PC's which were causing log-on delays and becoming extremely difficult to support and maintain. A new desktop strategy was required that allowed for greater productivity, but also to take the strain away from the IT Support Team.

Stewart Hall, Head of Infrastructure at Brent Borough Council (Brent) said, "We were a traditional XP fat client estate and were experiencing problems with log-in times and maintenance of the PC's across our sites. PC's were generally taking between 20-30 minutes to log-on and even 45 minutes in some cases. When you added this time up over a week, month or year then it was a serious issue for the productivity of our workforce. We were also finding the PC's challenging to support, particularly with implementing patches or providing general maintenance. We have 2150 desktops spread across 50 sites, with the majority, 1650, housed at our Civic Centre. The other 500 are spread over the other 49 locations and we needed 4 vans and just shy of 70 support staff throughout the various IT scatter teams in order to keep the lights on."

Hall continued, "We had been aware of client virtualisation for some time, so we already knew the route we wanted to go down and that it would address a lot of the challenges we were facing. With this in mind, we implemented vWorkspace in order to deliver our RDSH and VDI sessions. We set out with the aim of virtualising 90% of our desktops.

Another key target for Brent was to achieve an 'Outstanding' BREEAM accreditation when designing their new Civic Centre. BREEAM is the world's foremost environmental assessment award body for building projects, and measures a building's environmental performance, particularly in low carbon and low impact design, energy efficiency and low carbon technologies.

Part of the BREEAM assessment would focus on energy efficiency in IT, including desktop devices. Thin Clients were chosen as the preferred endpoint devices due to the low energy consumption in comparison to PC's. Brent started to test compatible Thin Client devices from various vendors including Dell/Wyse, IGEL, ChipPC, HP and 10ZiG.

THE SOLUTION

Brent Borough Council chose 10ZiG Windows Embedded Thin Clients for their enterprise level vWorkspace environment. The new solution has allowed for the remote management of the 10ZiG devices and as a knock on effect, has enabled the IT Team to restructure and provide value to the business elsewhere.

"All of the hardware we tested was pretty much on par with each other in terms of performance with vWorkspace, but we chose 10ZiG as our preferred Thin Client vendor based on the outstanding pre-sales service we received from them. Don't get me wrong, the 10ZiG devices performed well, but the real differentiator was the attention they paid to our requirements. We needed a DNS Look-up feature where the Thin Clients would automatically find the 10ZiG Manager console when added to the network. At the time of trialling them, the 10ZiG devices only worked via a Broadcast Discovery method. 10ZiG took away our requirements and developed the feature for us on the fly. The way that they dynamically and proactively addressed this for us really set them apart from the other vendors" explained Hall.

He continued... "With the DNS Look-up feature now implemented, it was extremely easy for us to swap out our XP PC's with 10ZiG Thin Clients. We experienced absolutely no downtime at all with the migration, as we worked at weekends swapping out batches of 120 at a time. There is no way that we would be able to install PC's at that rate. Nearly four years into our project, we now have 2027 10ZiG devices within Brent. Around 80% of those devices reside at our new Civic Centre, with the other 20% spread across remote sites, including 139 devices at our 6 libraries. The devices have had a huge impact on the performance we can now achieve at the desktop

and we are now at around 98% virtualised with Thin Client desktops, so we have over achieved. The small minority of desktops that we haven't implemented are due our accessibility software not performing as it should within RDSH or VDI environments. Additionally, the cost of AutoCAD licenses for virtual environments is very expensive, and far outweighs the number of users who require it."

Brent utilised the 10ZiG Management console to aid a seamless roll-out, but have also used SCCM so that they can manage both the Thin Clients and AutoCAD desktops within the same management tool. Following a customer request, 10ZiG adapted their product offering to allow full integration and support for System Centre Configuration Manager (SCCM) to further enhance their reputation of being a company that develops customer driven solutions. The new solution has afforded Brent to run an "aggressive hot-desking" environment at the Civic Centre where there are 1650 desktops to service 2,100 users. The solution is extremely flexible for users, as it allows them to ability to move between desks or offices where they can quickly reconnect to the same session from another Thin Client without loss of data. This also means that when workers leave the office, it frees desk space for another user to log-in on the vacant desktop. Each station has an 802.1x authenticated network point, IP Phone and a 10ZiG Windows Embedded Thin Client.

In 2014, Brent received the 'Outstanding' BREEAM accreditation they had been working toward, and 10ZiG Thin Clients played their part in this success. The 10ZiG Thin Clients consume between 8-12 watts which has helped to achieve a 33% reduction in carbon emission and energy consumption. Hall declared that the Thin Clients had accounted for "...an exponential reduction in wattage." A total score of 93% made the Civic Centre the greenest public office building in the UK, and the fourth greenest in Europe.

THE BENEFITS

By utilising vWorkspace with 10ZiG Windows Embedded Thin Clients, London Borough of Brent have increased productivity and performance at the desktop, whilst drastically reducing the impact that supporting an Enterprise level of desktops has on the IT Department. As a result of the overall project, Brent was awarded an 'Outstanding' BREEAM environmental accreditation.

Hall outlined the difference that their new solution has had on the business, "The solution has had a huge impact on the way that IT functions at Brent. We have drastically reduced log-in times from an average of 30 minutes, down to an initial log-on of around 90 seconds on a Monday morning. During the rest of the week, the sessions are just reconnected so it is then reduced to a matter of a few seconds. This has saved a huge amount of time over the three years since we implemented the solution."

"One of the largest impacts the solution has had for us, is the reduction in the maintenance and support required from our IT Department. We used to have 4 vans that provided on-site assistance for our remote offices, but since the implementation we receive so little requests for site visits that we no longer own any vehicles for this purpose. All together we used to employ 68 people within the IT Department, but we have now re-allocated a large percentage of those employees to new positions. In total, 20 job posts were removed following the implementation and we have also taken over the helpdesk, originally comprising of 12 staff. The extra resource we gained from this consolidation meant we could re-focus those employees to provide value to the business elsewhere."

Hall summarised his experience of 10ZiG Technology, "The service from 10ZiG has been great, with the Sales Team proving to be responsive and quick to deal with our enquiries. The Support Team have always been attentive and have actioned the small number of RMA requests quickly and efficiently. The Engineers here at Brent have never raised any concerns with the 10ZiG Support Team so we are very happy with that side of things.

"We have recommended 10ZiG to other councils on a number of occasions. They ask me how to determine which vendor/product is the best, and I tell them to make sure that the vendor has a team like 10ZiG in the background. Right from the start 10ZiG showed evidence that they were willing to work outside the box for us and cared about our project. The Thin Clients have been spot-on as well, proving to be extremely reliable with low failure rates. It was a good business decision choosing 10ZiG and we are definitely happy customers."

James Broughton, Sales Manager for 10ZiG EMEA summarised, "I would like to thank London Borough of Brent for assisting 10ZiG with this case study and for choosing us as a partner for this project. By working closely together we were able to tailor our solution to meet your key requirements, a service we have been offering our customers in the UK since 2005. The new Civic Centre is amazing and I'm proud that low power 10ZiG Thin Clients counted towards achieving the BREEAM accreditation to make this one of the most energy efficient buildings in the world and of course without compromise to the end user experience at the desktop."