Nominated Company: Dell

Nomination Title: DVS Simplified Appliance: Solving PC support issues with a simple and affordable VDI solution

IT budgets are under pressure, yet support requirements are growing and traditional desktop PCs are ageing. The virtualization of desktops is a promising option to help solve PC support issues, however budget and resource restraints can make it difficult for enterprises to make the change to a virtualized environment.

The DVS Simplified Appliance integrates factory-installed Citrix® VDI-in-a-Box software and Citrix XenServer® on a preconfigured Dell™ PowerEdge™ R720 or T620 server. Additional components and functions include:

- VDI Manager (VDI MGR) software: Creates and manages virtual desktops on physical servers and manages grid architecture. Runs as a virtual machine and is imported as a .xva or .ovf.
- Desktop agent (kDA): Agent software communicates with VDI MGR about user login/logout and virtual desktop health. The agent software resides on each hosted virtual machine.
- Hypervisor: Hosts all the virtual desktops (client OS), apps, kDA Agents, VDI MGR virtual machine. The DVS Simplified Appliance supports Citrix XenServer or Microsoft® Hyper-V™ hypervisors.
- Dell PowerEdge R720 and T620 servers: Chose either the R720 or T620 server to power your solution. Servers are preconfigured and optimized to achieve an ideal balance of price and performance.
- Grid server architecture: Auto load-balances user workloads across the grid. Wizard-based setup simplifies management and scalability.
- Dell ProSupport: Delivers comprehensive 3-year hardware and software support, including access to experts 24x7x365. Dell ProSupport™ is included in the DVS Simplified Appliance solution.

Dell DVS Simplified Appliance is a simple, affordable and practical tool for adopting a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) in order to modernise existing PC environments. Dell DVS Simplified Appliance offers:

- An out-of-the-box solution that comes preinstalled and preconfigured on Dell PowerEdge servers. It is provides all the benefits of desktop provisioning, image and user management within existing hardware budgets.
- It is fully interoperable with any existing network infrastructure which means the solution can get up and running in hours rather than months. In fact, the Dell DVS Simplified Appliance can be up and running in as little as four hours.
- It supports new and existing PCs, virtual desktops and mobile devices.
- The product streamlines the deployment and management of desktops by centralising brokering, load balancing, desktop provisioning and image management on the server. This centralisation in turn improves security.

Unlike its competitors the Dell DVS Simplified Appliance brings simplicity and affordability without the need for IT specialists, and makes VDI simple to implement and extremely cost-effective.

SMBs and large organisations have simplified desktop management

The time, cost and resource complexities of deploying and running a VDI can discourage SMBs from implementing desktop virtualization solutions. The Dell DVS Simplified Appliance enables SMBs to overcome these issues by providing an affordable, manageable and scalable VDI solution.

For Dell's customers, this has led to a significant impact on business productivity. Crucially, customers have avoided security and data loss, without sacrificing on the ability to access data and applications on any device; they have also been able to support bring-your-own-device (BYOD) initiatives, reduce costs, simplify management and encourage innovation.

The Dell DVS Simplified Appliance has been used by local governments, councils and the public sector. In particular, the product is very popular in the education sector. Typically the Dell DVS Simplified Appliance is installed in organisations with between 50-500 seats.

One appliance for all your needs

Having a computer, storage, management and licensing all in one appliance offers a major advantage to organisations. This is one of the major differentiations of the Dell DVS Simplified Appliance when compared to competitors' products. In addition, the Dell DVS Simplified Appliance is fully contained and has flexible form factors meaning that servers can be either tower or rack mounted. In contrast competitors use an attached storage solution.

CASE STUDY: Los Angeles Unified School District sets up an entire computer lab in a single day

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) supports 186 schools over a large geographical area. The LAUSD recently went through a number of radical changes, including adding computer labs to its 186 schools. With limited technical support staff, a tight budget and strict time frame to adhere to there were a number of challenges from the offset.

The LAUSD were looking for a sustainable solution which would meet these objectives. The key deliverables were that computer labs needed to be set up in the LAUSD's schools and these needed to be delivered on time, within budget and managed without the need for technically qualified staff. When kicking off the project the LAUSD considered a VDI solution. Yet despite the advantages a VDI was considered to be too costly and require too many technical support staff.

Before deciding to ditch the idea of a VDI altogether the LAUSD enlisted the help of Dell. The Dell DVS Simplified Appliance met the needs of the project perfectly. The simplified management enabled the LAUSD to support the computers remotely removing the need to individual support teams in each of the 186 schools. The infrastructure within the computer labs was able to be set up within a single day, meaning the project met the time requirement. In addition, the number of support calls were also kept to a minimum.

This project demonstrates that the DVS Simplified Appliance enables IT efficiency on a limited budget and with limited technical support.

Why nominee should win

- Enabled a complete computer lab to be set up in a single day
- Support the needs of individual schools remotely, removing the need for individual support teams in each of the 186 schools
- Reduce the number of technical support teams needed
- Streamline deployment and get up and running within four hours
- Reduce desktop management complexity