CUSTOMER **STORY**

vmware®

Based in the iconic 20 Fenchurch Street, or Walkie-Talkie Building as it is affectionately known, Tokio Millennium Re (UK) Ltd (TMRUK) has offered short and long tail reinsurance solutions to clients in the UK, Republic of Ireland, Africa, Middle East, Asia and Latin America, as well as speciality treaty reinsurance to clients worldwide since 2005. Following a corporate restructuring, this business is now written via the UK Branch of Tokio Millennium Re AG, also based in the Walkie-Talkie.

THE **CHALLENGE**

TMRUK were going through an office move and needed to replace PC hardware that was up to six years old. They needed a solution that not only alleviated the problems of supporting and maintaining those desktops, but one that also provided a reliable, responsive and aesthetically pleasing desktop environment.

TMRUK were on the verge of moving into the iconic 20 Fenchurch Street Building which afforded them the opportunity of replacing their old desktop estate. Their PCs were between five & six years old and were proving problematic for both the desktop users and the IT Team. TMRUK were experiencing sluggish performance and the IT Team were spending a large amount of time, dealing with PXE matters and graphic card problems along with memory and disk issues too. Aside from the internal difficulties, the PCs were also bulky and took up a lot of space on desks.

TMRUK's goal was to deploy a reliable desktop solution with the added benefits of being easier to manage and easier to maintain. In addition, new endpoints would have to be hidden from the work area to promote a clean, tidy and aesthetically pleasing workplace.

After implementing VMware Horizon View as their chosen VDI solution, TMRUK turned their attention to Windows Embedded Thin Clients as their preferred endpoint device.

Simon Granger, IT Manager for TMRUK explained why Windows Embedded was a route they chose over Zero Client devices "We utilise MS Lync Enterprise Voice which requires a Windows only plug-in installing on the endpoint to redirect the audio. The plug-in allows for the direct interaction of the Lync Client, endpoint and multimedia redirection (MMR) which stops the requirement for multimedia rendering via the data centre or VDI environment first.

Despite not being able to go down the Zero Client route, we still hoped to provide that kind of intuitive, polished and simplified look and feel".

Paul Rimmer, Senior IT Analyst at TMRUK talked us through the testing phase of the project "Once we knew the aims of our project, we reached out to our reseller to come up with a list of potential Thin Client vendors. We then requested demonstration devices from 10ZiG, Dell Wyse, HP, Fujitsu, Chip PC and IGEL. We wanted to test a wide variety of devices to make sure we found the best fit for our requirements.

"Through our testing we looked at the resource usage of each device and found that the 10ZiG model was the only one we felt comfortable with deploying. We needed a Thin Client that could cope with CPU demands and not run out of RAM when running the VMware Horizon Client. This taxed a lot of the other devices we tested, whereas the 10ZiG device was able to cope with this comfortably. There were other high-end options out there that met these requirements but the pricing was no-where near as competitive as the 10ZiG offering."

10ZiG Windows Embedded Thin Clients allow for an upgrade of both Flash Memory and RAM. WES7 WES8 & W10 IoT have a standard Flash Memory of 16GB which is upgradeable to 32GB, 64GB or 128GB.

Likewise, the RAM of both WES7 and WE8 offer a standard configuration of 2GB but can be increased to 4GB or 8GB.

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THE **SOLUTION**

TMRUK implemented 10ZiG Windows Embedded Thin Clients capable of the demands put upon it to provide a reliable endpoint device. The Thin Clients are of small form factor design and support VESA mounting. This has enabled them to be mounted underneath the desks to meet the goal of providing a clean and tidy work area.

Rimmer focused on the hardware specification playing a key part in choosing 10ZiG as their endpoint of choice "Being able to upgrade the RAM in the 10ZiG device was a key reason we chose it. Some of the other vendors said it wasn't possible to upgrade their RAM specification and could only provide a standard build configuration. I also didn't like where other vendors were going with their choice of CPU, however I was happy with the 10ZiG Intel CPU which made the device fast enough for our requirements".

10ZiG utilises industry leading chipsets such as AMD 2.4GHz Quad Core, Intel 2GHz Quad Core and Intel .33GHz Dual Core. By unifying this powerful hardware with our finely tuned Windows Embedded, Linux and Software Zero Client images, we are able to create solutions that take advantage of the full feature set of protocols such as PCoIP and HDX. Our devices are capable of meeting the demands of all user types, from task based users right through to power users requiring Unified Communications, Flash, HD Multimedia, 3D, CAD, NVIDIA, VMware vGPU and HDX 3D Pro.

Granger gave an insight into how the 10ZiG devices are being utilised at TMRUK "The 10ZiG Thin Clients run in a kiosk mode which means that they connect directly to the VMware Horizon Client. To achieve this 'Zero Client' look and feel we joined them to the domain and applied group policy down to them so that the users don't physically see the embedded desktop when they log-in.

On boot, they automatically launch the Horizon client which automatically passes through the user's credentials and auto-logs them onto their desktops. "By utilising the local storage available, we also installed some other software to redirect CTRL ALT DEL. Our users can still use the function, but it doesn't lock the embedded machine, only the end desktop. The only peripherals we have attached are a wireless keyboard and mouse, again adding to the clean look and feel of the desktop. Despite the Windows Embedded route, we have achieved the 'Zero' feel we wanted from the off-set."

Rimmer went on to describe the impact the 10ZiG solution has had at TMRUK "The feedback has been very positive from our users and the rollout has been a success. The Thin Clients have allowed us to run a full VDI environment and we no longer have the management headaches we had been experiencing. Now, the virtual machines are held in the VMware virtual environment, so any hardware upgrades, CPU or RAM requirements are far easier to administer. When one of our staff members needs to move desk, it is extremely quick and easy as the 10ZiG hardware doesn't need to move. The experience is the same at every desk.

"We also use the 10ZiG Manager which was free of charge with the purchase. We have two golden images, one for each 10ZiG model we use and the manager allows us to flash these to the Thin Clients. It also manages the domain auto-joining and the movement of the units from the default Computer Organisational Unit (OU) to the Thin Client OU we have set up. We also provide a user name against each machine in the 10ZiG Manager so we know which Thin Client is assigned to which user".

THE **BENEFITS**

TMRUK have drastically reduced the time it takes them to install, upgrade and replace their hardware. In addition, 10ZiG Manager has allowed the devices to be monitored and imaged remotely and has helped to simplify the installation and management process.

Rimmer explained the impact of the 10ZiG solution on deploying new desktops "With our old PC's it would take around half a day to roll out, upgrade or replace a desktop. We would have to re-install Windows 7 and then complete a full install of all the applications. Because they are now stored in the virtual machine, the majority of customisation is at the back-end. This means the 10ZiG devices just need to have a quick OS and a small footprint. By pushing out one of the golden images through the 10ZiG Manager, the process of rolling out a new device takes as little as half an hour.

"10ZiG carried out some custom development for us throughout the project which their developers worked on specifically for us. They helped us to customise the OS on both of the 10ZiG models we use. Customisations included disabling services, removing software, updating software, changing the boot images and basically tweaking and increasing the performance to get the best out of it in our environment. This meant we could achieve the 'Zero Client' feel where the unit boots straight into the VMware client without seeing a Windows desktop."

Rimmer explained why 10ZiG's ability to work closely with TMRUK was a key part of their overall decision "We needed a vendor that was happy to work with us and had the ability to customise their image to our requirements. Also, the fact that we were able to double the RAM specification of our devices from 2GB to 4GB was a feather in 10ZiG's cap. Some of the other vendors just couldn't offer this. They have been very easy to work with as a company".

Granger summarised TMRUK's experience with 10ZiG "We have had a very good working relationship with 10ZiG throughout the project. Most of the Sales process went through our reseller, but access to demo devices has been straightforward and anything we have asked of them has been prompt.

"Any issues we have had from a technical point of view have been responded to by phone and email quickly and efficiently. We have experienced some teething problems during the implementation and rollout, but we were actually given direct access to two of their Support Technicians. They visited our site for the day to see the issues first hand. The majority of those were rectified and any others were escalated to the Development Team to be worked on. It is important that issues are acknowledged and the communication lines between 10ZiG and TMRUK have been open which is great.

"Overall it has been a good business decision to choose 10ZiG as we wouldn't have got the high-level of personal attention and support we require from the bigger vendors. I would recommend 10ZiG to other companies, highlighting their advanced replacement warranty as a key reason. The prompt replacement of any faulty devices minimises any disruption and is a big plus point".

> **"It's fantastic to see how TMRUK have successfully deployed VMware Horizon and at the same time overcome the traditional headaches associated with running Windows Embedded on the Client Device."**
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> **Kevin Greenway**
> **Managing Director at 10ZiG Technology**

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