

Case Study

“Because it’s a zero client, there’s no OS on the Pano Device so there’s no confusion when logging in and there’s nothing to manage at the endpoint so that users can do their work and leave the management to IT.”

— Craig Wilson, Director of IT, Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.

Key Benefits:

- Saved hundreds of dollars by reducing workstation costs
- Continued savings of over \$10,000 per year in energy costs
- Eliminated hours of lost billings every day
- Significantly reduced time spent managing, fixing and updating aging PCs
- Durability considerably decreased hardware costs and user downtime

Founded in 1979, Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A. is a full-service, entrepreneurial, commercial law firm dedicated to advancing the best interests of its clients and community. Based in Minneapolis and St. Paul, the firm serves individuals as well as Fortune 500 corporations in a wide variety of practice areas including business and commercial litigation, intellectual property, banking and finance, and tax law, trusts and estates.

To support 90 attorneys and administrative staff, Winthrop & Weinstine has a main data center and a co-located data center that also supports their business continuity and disaster recovery needs. The firm has had extensive prior experience with server virtualization and currently runs a total of 18 physical servers including five with VMware ESX installed and running 35 virtual servers, and two with VMware View running 70 desktop virtual machines. Six full-time IT employees serve the needs of the entire organization, supporting a total of 225 desktops. In 2008, when faced with an aging fleet of PCs and the need to support an increasingly mobile workforce, the IT department at Winthrop & Weinstine began to search for a replacement to their

traditional PCs that would be cost-effective, as well as more manageable and accessible, and that might take advantage of the infrastructure and expertise they had previously built deploying VMware.

“Our PCs were five years old and it was time to purchase new ones,” said Craig Wilson, Director of IT at Winthrop & Weinstine. “Since we wanted to leverage our VMware infrastructure, we began to look at desktop alternatives, and focused on thin clients from companies like Wyse, HP and the zero-client from Pano Logic.”

The Pano System Beats Out Thin Client Contenders

After investigating and running trials with a number of different architectures, the law firm decided to adopt the Pano System. Winthrop & Weinstine had been successfully using VMware in their data center for a year when they learned about Pano Logic in October 2008.

“Originally we looked at Wyse thin clients, but began to run into a few issues,” said Wilson. “The firm uses Cisco phones with Unity voicemail kept within Microsoft Outlook and with Wyse we encountered a two second delay between the phone and the thin client. For us and the team we support, this was a problem.”

Wilson also realized that although the company had deployed VMware View, some of their attorneys were continuing to use their regular PCs for a number of reasons, which undermined the support and productivity benefits of desktop virtualization. In addition, while evaluating thin client alternatives, Wilson and his team realized that although little was being run on the Wyse thin clients they were still prone to problems like memory leaks, resulting in frozen clients, forced reboots and lost productivity unless users were trained to reboot the thin clients periodically.

“That’s where the Pano System really shines,” said Wilson. “Because it’s a zero client, there’s no OS or software on the Pano Device, leaving no potential for problems at the endpoint so that users can focus on their work and leave managing the technology to IT.”

“In addition to making IT’s job easier, the Pano System has allowed our attorneys to be as efficient as possible. “We cannot ask for more than this — it’s been a perfect fit.”

Craig Wilson, Director of IT,
Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.

Reduced Purchase Costs and Energy Savings

Since deploying 40 Panos Systems in their accounting, IT and human resource departments in addition to a select group of attorneys, Winthrop & Weinstine has experienced a number of benefits, including cost savings on the initial purchase, energy savings and time spent on desktop management.

Winthrop & Weinstine saved on the purchase price of the Pano System, which begins at \$329 for a single device rather than the usual purchase of a comparable, single PC

well over \$1,000 once necessary hot spares and replacement parts were included.

In addition, Wilson and his IT team calculated significant energy cost savings by replacing their PCs with the Pano System. By hooking up their traditional PCs and Pano devices to a wattage meter, they estimate that they will save \$10,000 per year per 100 Pano Systems deployed.

“Our traditional PCs pull 140 to 200 plus watts. We found that even when they’re turned off, they pull three to five watts of power, which is what a Pano Device uses while turned on and in use,” said Wilson. “The energy savings are very significant.”

Improved Management and Increased Productivity and Accessibility

Since the Pano Device has only one button and functions like a native Microsoft Windows desktop, the Pano System easily integrated into the Winthrop & Weinstine infrastructure with

little training needed by users. The consistency of desktop configurations and the ability to quickly resume sessions with a Pano virtual desktop has led to one of the most important savings — user productivity. The firm's often mobile attorneys are able to turn on their Pano Devices or plug in a Pano Remote USB key, login and access the exact same Windows desktop image they were last using when they logged out.

“Our early adopter attorneys find the Pano System to be incredibly user-friendly and efficient as they can access the same desktop from any location,” said Wilson. “And now when they're in the office, they only have to push a button to end their session. When they're ready to work again, at home, they can securely login to their desktop and find it as they left it.”

Wilson estimates that the easy accessibility and ability to immediately return to the same open files and applications saves the attorneys as much as 30 minutes a day compared to prior experience with traditional Windows PCs and Citrix deployments. “That might not sound like a lot but given the attorneys billing rate, the lost time and missed billings quickly added up across the firm.” said Wilson. “With the Pano Devices, they get all of that time back, with no need to restart the client or to locate and open applications and files so they're back to work instantly.”

Durability and maintenance of the endpoint devices are another area where the Pano System is delivering significant benefits. Across the entire population of aging PCs, failure rates were as high as 10% per month and Wilson had to reserve capital funds to buy spare PCs and parts every time a workstation purchase was made. Before deploying Pano Devices, if a user had problems with his PC, Wilson and his team often

would have to replace the power supply, hard drive or the entire system to minimize downtime for the users.

Now, if a user has an issue or needs a security patch or update, Wilson and his team can easily deploy a new virtual desktop without even having to visit the attorney's office. And with no moving parts and very simple design, hardware failures are no longer an issue with the Pano Devices, reducing both the maintenance load on the IT staff and the overall hardware costs. If a Pano Device does need to be replaced it's a simple job that even users can accomplish since the replacement doesn't need to have any software installed or require any configuration.

Panos for Everyone

Because of these benefits, Wilson has encountered little resistance to the adoption and use of the Pano System.

“Unlike deploying a new PC, with all of the subtle nuances each user has to learn, the Pano Systems offers much greater consistency to both our users and the IT staff. One user recently told us she thought it was better than her PC,” said Wilson. “Along with the reduced support and ease of use benefits, the look of the device is also a draw. People are constantly asking me when they are going to get one of the cool silver boxes on their desk.”

Due to the positive feedback from users and the great benefits they've experienced, the firm is currently considering replacing all of their PCs with the Pano System.

“In addition to making IT's job easier, the Pano System has allowed our attorneys to be as efficient as possible,” said Wilson. “We cannot ask for more than this – it's been a perfect fit.”