ACCELERATING COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) is located in the heart of Belgium. It has almost 600 years of history with six campuses and 14 faculties in human science, health sciences and science and technology. UCL serves a body of 28,700 students representing over 127 nationalities. Its mission is to educate, conduct research and advance the local and scientific communities at large.

The IT department at UCL manages the delivery of services to faculty staff, researchers, students and visitors to the nine campus libraries. The IT department's vision is to offer users a "work from anywhere" mobile experience and the freedom to use their own devices when accessing resources.
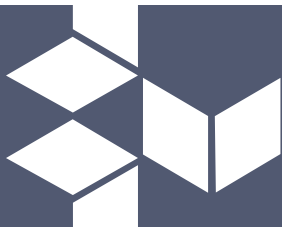
The Challenge

UCL needed to deliver a diverse set of applications, designed for different operating systems, to many different types of devices. Traditional application delivery methods, such as automated scripted installation, did not support their vision of work from anywhere and required manual device intervention and management.

The scope of their requirement was to build a long term partnership to develop a solution that adapts to student and researcher needs. The resulting solution also needed to be an open Web-based platform. It had to offer an on-demand service that supports both Linux and Windows simultaneously, with universal access from student and faculty-owned devices. The solution also had to be delivered in a cost-efficient manner, preferring to avoid large capital expenditures in favour of an OPEX model.

The Solution

During the evaluation phase, UCL explored various approaches from traditional methods to a fully hosted virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI). The University uses a wide variety of applications, from statistical and modelling tools to productivity tools developed for both Linux and Windows platforms. By its very nature, a VDI desktop is restricted to either Windows or Linux. When combined with its heavier infrastructure requirements, particularly when scaling a solution to many thousands of users, VDI was discounted early on as a solution option.

CUSTOMER

Université catholique de Louvain

https://uclouvain.be

INDUSTRY

Higher Education

KEY CHALLENGES

Enable access to applications designed for different operating system on multiple types of devices.

Be cost-efficient and maximize resources.

UCL
Université catholique de Louvain

In contrast OVD Enterprise's shared architecture platform is efficient and lightweight. It offers the flexibility of seamless delivery of both Linux and Windows applications through a unified Web portal to HTML5 enabled devices. Simple to administer, OVD removes the barriers that a traditional distributed approach imposes, while not demanding complex and costly computing resources that a dedicated VDI solution requires.

Benefits

The adoption of OVD Enterprise as the preferred delivery platform enabled the IT team to offer users the flexibility of mobility, choice of device and access to a large catalogue of applications. Centralized delivery and control ensures that requests for applications can now be fulfilled instantly rather than the hours or days it may have taken in the past.

UCL prides itself on fostering opportunities for research and development with both academic and commercial organizations. With close to 3,000 researchers, 2,000 PhD students and nearly 1,000 research agreements signed each year, research is truly one of the driving force of the University.

Erin Dupuis, IT Director responsible for endpoint systems and software distribution said:

 "As a university, we are keen to leverage the partnership opportunities that the software offers. The chance to work on this project with the Inuvika team supports the UCL culture. Inuvika's technology offers a flexible and mature foundation. Additionally, OVD Enterprise vastly improves the speed at which we can implement collaborative research projects."

What's Next?

The next phase of the project is to scale the initial 200 concurrent user implementation to the thousands of campus users over the next 3 years. Improved software usage reporting will enable better accounting of software assets and drive efficiencies in licensing management. Meanwhile, the team continues to enhance its capabilities for collaborative research with the planned integration of data sharing, social media and Web based applications.

" OVD Enterprise vastly improves the speed at which we can implement collaborative research projects. "

Erin Dupuis
IT Director, UCL

REQUIREMENTS

- Enable mobile and remote access.
- Deliver both Windows and Linux applications through a unified Web portal.
- Avoid large CAPEX expenditures.

OVD BENEFITS

- Accelerated app delivery.
- Common desktop for Windows and Linux apps.
- Zero client Web access.
- Improved reporting.
- Optimized software license usage.