



Amadeus FiRe

Citrix Application Delivery
for Professional Services

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Jürgen Terpin
Director of Information
Technology,
Amadeus FiRe AG

Key benefits

- Rapid and secure application delivery across the enterprise
- Optimized application performance over WAN connections
- Flexible work via secure SSL VPN connectivity
- Ability to get new locations up and running quickly

Amadeus FiRe unblocks congestion between remote locations with Citrix WANScaler

Amadeus FiRe AG, headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, is a leading personnel services provider in the areas of accounting, office work, banking and IT services. With its specialization in specific key qualifications, the company has captured an excellent position in the market: in the first nine months of the 2007 fiscal year alone, total revenues reached 68 million euros, an increase of 37 percent over the prior year.

Amadeus FiRe's fast growth has been accompanied by geographical expansion. For example, the company opened four new offices in Germany and expanded its international business with subsidiaries in England, Austria and the Netherlands. Most recently, new offices were set up in Manchester and Leeds in the UK.

The Challenge: Supporting growth with fast delivery of business applications

The Amadeus FiRe IT department plays an important role in the growth process. The department must ensure that new subsidiaries are operational quickly and that new employees receive access to all necessary business applications without delay.

Amadeus FiRe adopted Citrix Presentation Server™ virtualization technology with Microsoft® Windows Server® 2003 to deliver applications running on a server farm in Frankfurt to employees in the subsidiary locations via LAN, WAN or Internet. In addition to productivity applications such as Microsoft® Office, Internet Explorer® and Adobe Acrobat, the company delivers business-critical SAP solutions and an internally developed sales and marketing application based on Oracle technology and PHP using Presentation Server.

Since the conversion to this centralized architecture, the people responsible for IT at Amadeus FiRe do not worry about further growth. “As a rule, we are no longer on site when a new subsidiary is opened,” reported Jürgen Terpin, director of the Information Technology Department. “An external service provider carries out the implementation of the structured wiring, active network components and the telephone system for us — and only thin-client devices are used. These can be unpacked and connected without difficulty by the users themselves with a little bit of phone support.”

A somewhat greater challenge arose with the connection of the locations in England. “The employees in our first British subsidiary in Birmingham often complained about the somewhat rough connections,” said Jens Reimann, an IT staff member. “Letters would not appear immediately while typing and the user sessions would ‘freeze.’ In particular, the SAP applications were inoperable at times.”

Networking environment

- Citrix Presentation Server™ running on a Dell PowerEdge 1850 server
- Citrix WANScaler™
- Citrix Access Gateway™, Advanced Edition
- Microsoft® Windows Server® 2003
- Approx. 330 devices (280 thin clients, 50 PCs)
- WAN and LAN connections

One thought at the time was to solve the problem through greater bandwidth. Due to the long distance, however, the company faced extremely high WAN costs. Instead of upgrading bandwidth that may not help application performance, Amadeus FiRe decided to test Citrix WANScaler™, a solution developed specifically for WAN optimization and application acceleration to branch offices.

Implementing Citrix WANScaler

“Our first impressions of WANScaler were very positive,” said Reimann. “The WANScaler appliances in Birmingham and Frankfurt were connected within minutes. Since the solution is completely network-transparent, no adjustments to the existing infrastructure were necessary.” The configuration of WANScaler was uncomplicated: the Citrix AutoOptimizer™ Engine automatically uses the appropriate compression and acceleration technology on the data flow based on the network environment. The optimal processes are chosen through real-time determination of WAN performance. Adaptive TCP flow control prevents degradation of TCP performance due to packet loss and renewed data transfers due to network congestion. AutoOptimizer thereby minimizes WAN penalties and provides maximum application performance and WAN utilization.

Citrix WANScaler solutions are installed primarily when poor performance affects the productivity of users in branch offices. With WANScaler, administrators can increase the data flow rate considerably and increase the performance of TCP-based applications by up to 30 times over the WAN. In a pure Presentation Server environment, such as the one used by Amadeus FiRe, data flow over the Citrix® ICA® protocol between client and the server is already optimally compressed for use over bandwidth-constrained network connections. However, high latency — a condition of long distance networks that Presentation Server cannot influence — was identified as the cause of poor application performance in the Amadeus FiRe British subsidiaries.

WAN optimization allows employees to work more productively

The end user experience was immediately improved with WANScaler in the network. “We received feedback from our users in Birmingham that uninterrupted work was finally possible immediately after the implementation of the solution,” reported Terpin. “Based on our positive experience with the optimized connection between our Birmingham office and Frankfurt, we will use Citrix WANScaler whenever we open another branch office abroad. And WANScaler is so easy to configure, our external IT contractors can install this without requiring us to send a network engineer overseas.”

Secure access to IT resources also through the Internet

With the Citrix solution, Amadeus FiRe delivers applications to employees at the subsidiaries. However, the company also wanted to extend application delivery to workers outside the office. “Sometimes our users want to check their e-mails on weekends or continue to work on time-critical projects from home,” said Terpin. “But we had significant security concerns about devices that were not controlled by the company.”

With Citrix, Amadeus FiRe found a solution for that scenario as well. Citrix Access Gateway™, Advanced Edition, an SSL VPN solution featuring SmartAccess policy-based control, allows secure remote application delivery via the Internet to any standard browser. Combined with the use of two-factor authentication tokens, Access Gateway provides a high level of security over the network using

SSL-based encryption. Further, SmartAccess functionality allows the IT team to specify the level of access each remote user is allowed, and which actions can be taken — such as downloading or printing to the desktop.

According to Terpin, the Citrix solution complements the growth strategy of Amadeus FiRe very well. “We have gained a lot of flexibility through Access Gateway without having to make compromises in our security. This product provides flexibility as we open new locations. Should the launch of a new subsidiary be delayed for any reason, employees could work from home or in a temporary office by connecting to our Citrix environment over the Internet. Secure application delivery with Access Gateway will ensure that they are productive immediately.”

Applications delivered

- Microsoft® Office and Internet Explorer®
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- SAP GUI
- Internally developed CRM software
- Recruitment Software
Microdec Profile RPM

About the Citrix Solution

Citrix Presentation Server™ is the de facto standard for delivering Windows® applications at the lowest cost—to any user, anywhere. It offers both application virtualization and application streaming delivery methods to enable the best access experience for any user, with any device, working over any network. Citrix WANScaler™ is a completely transparent, end-to-end enterprise WAN acceleration solution that encompasses data centers, remote offices, home offices and mobile workers, providing high performance WAN optimization and application acceleration that reduces user wait times and improves throughput across wide area networks. Citrix Access Gateway™ is the only SSL VPN to securely deliver any application with policy-based SmartAccess control.

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