



PowerVDC - Just another Thin Client?

In this day and age, where virtualization, centralization and consolidation are important processes in IT infrastructures, one cannot be surprised that more and more companies are looking at server based computing solutions. A logical next step is phasing out fat PC clients and replacing them with thin clients.

There are many different thin clients at the moment, some use Windows XPe, some use WinCe and others use a Linux version as an operating system. This operating system is needed to run the client for the application the device connects to. But is it a prerequisite?

In the case of the PowerVDC, it isn't and this is what makes this thin client unique. I prefer to call it an Ultra Thin Client, or even better, Virtual Display Client (VDC). This device only has a BIOS which enables the VDC to connect to an appliance in the network.

In short, this appliance will act as the actual client for the server based application. This application can be a Windows application, a UNIX application or even a mainframe application. The only communication between the appliance and the VDC is screen, mouse and keyboard information.

The design of the VDC implies that the device is completely stateless. From management point of view this is exactly what you want. Let's summarize what impact this solution can have in your environment.

If, for example, you have an organization that is using traditional thin clients that were implemented in different stages, odds are you have different models due to model revisions. Usually, this means you need to keep track of different software upgrades for all different models. Since the PowerVDC is a stateless device, there will be no management whatsoever at the desktop.

If new software clients are developed you might be forced to do a hardware upgrade at the desktop. This could mean unit replacements, adding memory, changing processor and/or adding fans. With the PowerVDC solution, in worst case, you would only need to upgrade the appliance, which is done centrally. Replacement of the PowerVDC and expansion of the number of deployed units can be done by facility employees since it's a plug-and-play solution. No IT knowledge is needed at the desktop.

Since the PowerVDC is not running any software client locally, you don't need (heavy) computing power on the desktop, so the power consumption is a miserly 4 watts. This equates to less than 3% power requirement compared to a desktop PC and about 10% of the power requirement of a standard thin client. In these times, where sustainability is an absolute necessity, this is not to be overlooked. Due to the fact that the power consumption is so low and there are no moving parts in the VDC, it is a completely silent solution and does not generate additional heat. The savings in energy will not only be the difference in power consumption on the desktop side, but also in the climate control systems of your company.

Another very important advantage is the way in which you can improve the security in your environment. Since the device is stateless, it is impregnable to viruses. For Windows XPe and Windows Ce thin and ultra-



thin clients viruses have been already been discovered. This is an increase in risk for traditional thin client environments.

As an administrator of the VDCs you can disable the ability for users to attach memory sticks or other USB storage devices too, thus theft of data can be confined, controlled and managed.

Another advanced feature is our hotdesking capability using smartcard technology. Users carry a smartcard which gives them access to the computing environment. This provides your organization with the ultimate flexible workspace. An employee has his/her desktop wherever he/she uses their personal smartcard. Once the smartcard is inserted in to the VDC the employee has their desktop back instantaneously, exactly the way it was left when the user was connected previously on the same or another VDC unit. Additional security can be imposed by using strong authentication requiring the user to enter a password and their smartcard to be able to access their desktop.

This smartcard hotdesking extends flexibility even further as the BIOS of the PowerVDC has a Cisco VPN client embedded, which makes it perfect for people working at home.

So, to answer the question in the title, no the PowerVDC is not just another thin client. It is a virtual display client which takes server based computing go a step further. The gains to you are many:

- flexibility
- enhanced security
- mobility
- sustainability
- manageability
- significant decrease in IT costs

When you look at server based computing environments as the next step in your IT infrastructure you need to ensure that your chosen solution provides a total server based computing solution, only with PowerVDC can you achieve this.

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