



Breaking down performance barriers

Group GSA enhances performance through greater collaboration between staff across multiple offices with a flexible, scalable and secure workstation-based virtual desktop solution



Architecture

Australia

Business needs

Group GSA wanted a seamless collaboration across its eight offices in Australia and South East Asia. The company wanted to be able to quickly ramp up resources at any of its locations to support local projects and enable fast connectivity to centralized data from multiple devices.

Solutions at a glance

- [Cloud Client-Computing](#)
 - [Dell Precision Rack 7910 workstations](#)
 - [Dell Wyse 5010 thin clients with Windows Embedded](#)
- [Storage](#)

Business results

- Improved agility to support new business
- Faster allocation of resources to projects
- Avoids capabilities being defined by location
- Greater productivity boosting customer satisfaction
- Reduced costs of IT with virtualized infrastructure
- Enhanced data resiliency across the organization

“We collaborated well with Dell on the POC to get the performance right, and all of our hard work paid off.”

Anthony Habashy, National Building Information Manager (BIM), Group GSA

Often working in teams, architects need to collaborate to succeed. But with international practices, it's as much about collaboration between offices as across offices that determines how well they perform. Group GSA, headquartered in Sydney, operates from eight locations across Australia and South East Asia, and has strategic alliances with other architectural offices worldwide.

Looking to build on its success

The company has grown by delivering great work and reacting quickly to new business opportunities. Nancy Piazzolla, chief operating officer at Group GSA explains the company wanted to build on this achievement. "We wanted to make it easier to bring new resources to new projects. As a business, you want to prevent location from limiting your capabilities in any way."

Making IT an enabler

Group GSA needed to overhaul its workstation environment to achieve its aims. Files were shared manually during projects. What's more, IT solutions had to be procured and installed at client locations if personnel needed to work onsite. Anthony Habashy, the national building information manager (BIM) of Group GSA, says, "We wanted to give everyone secure, easy access to a centralized depository of data regardless of their place of work or connection bandwidth."

A solution quickly evolves

Group GSA has a long-standing relationship with Dell EMC. Working with the Dell EMC Customer Solution Center in Sydney, Group GSA ran a proof of concept (POC) of a virtualized desktop solution (VDI) based on the Dell Precision Rack 7910 workstations with NVIDIA K2 cards. The workstations ran Group GSA's core Autodesk Revit software in a Citrix VDI environment. Habashy says, "We collaborated well with Dell on the POC to get the performance right, and all of our hard work paid off."

Improved agility to support new business

Group GSA moved the project forward by deploying the Dell Precision Rack 7910 workstations at its Sydney data

center. For storage, the workstations were connected to an existing Dell EMC Storage SC-Series v2000 array that Group GSA had procured during a previous project. The company is currently rolling out a number of Dell Wyse 5010 thin clients across offices in Australia and reusing many of its existing Dell OptiPlex 7040 desktops and Dell Precision T5500 workstations as endpoints for the VDI infrastructure. Piazzolla says, "We can scale up much faster with our Dell workstation-based VDI. We can onboard personnel quicker because they can access project data through multiple devices. We don't have to procure workstations."

Faster allocation of resources to projects

The company operates with more flexibility because individual offices can ramp up their capabilities in no time. Habashy says, "We simply get people from other Group GSA offices to support their colleagues across the VDI. It works incredibly well and helps us compensate for any skill shortages in the local job market."

"All staff need is a laptop tethered to a 4G-enabled smartphone, and they are good to go with our Dell VDI workstation solution."

Chris Azzi, Director, Insight IT



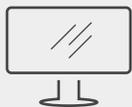
Greater productivity boosting customer satisfaction

Personnel work more effectively because they can easily access the files they need across the VDI. Teams of architects will typically work on a single project file. Today, all project files are securely stored in a central location and are always available to all those with permitted access. For Habashy, it means work gets handed over seamlessly and securely between offices. “The moment our office in Sydney closes, our office in Ho Chi Minh City can continue working on the same files.”

Reduced costs of IT with added protection

When staff need to work from client sites, Group GSA can avoid the cost of setting up a local network complete with servers, storage and endpoints. Chris Azzi, director of Insight IT, which is Group GSA's IT consultant, says, “All staff need is a laptop tethered to a 4G-enabled smartphone, and they are good to go with our Dell VDI workstation solution. It's fast, secure and flexible working from the ground up.”

Piazzolla adds, “We had the chance to work with Dell Financial Services on the deal. We've collaborated with the financial services team before. The leasing model suits our business because it is important to refresh our IT every few years. Dell Financial Services understands our business and is very client-focused.”



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