

Hays relies on Citrix for its new work strategy

Global recruitment company improves productivity with Citrix

The business challenge

As a global recruitment agency, Hays has first-hand experience of the changes occurring in the workplace. Each day, the company helps its customers stay abreast of the latest requirements. This includes making best use of the opportunities provided by digitization. Hays is exploring new ground with its new work strategy based on Citrix technologies. Mobile digital workspaces offer the company's employees maximum flexibility and simplify collaboration with external partners.

Hays is one of the world's leading recruitment agencies for highly qualified specialists. The company is active in both the private and public sectors and procures specialists for permanent positions, projects and temporary employment. Hays has more than 10,000 employees in 33 countries around the world. In Germany alone, the company has around 2,000 employees at 22 sites. They handle more than 3,000 customers and have access to a pool of over 400,000 specialist and managerial candidates. Hays' German headquarters is located in Mannheim.

The challenge: a workspace strategy for today's changing workplace

Hays' IT organization evaluated a range of different technologies and solutions before opting for a digital workspace concept based on Citrix technologies. Its IT partner, SVA System Vertrieb Alexander GmbH, designed the entire concept, which took just nine months to implement at the recruitment agency.

A key aspect in this was removing the existing Blackberry infrastructure for around 1,700 users. These devices no longer supported many mobile business apps and it had therefore become necessary to switch to an up-to-date enterprise mobility solution. In a survey of users, the majority of the employees at Hays chose Apple iPhones. Citrix Endpoint Management was implemented by the IT department in order to securely manage all mobile devices and apps.

HAYS

Industry

Professional Services

Location

UK

Citrix products

- Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops
- Citrix Endpoint Management

Key Benefits

- Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops simplify the management of desktops and applications and make it possible to work flexibly from any location
- Hays now uses Citrix Endpoint Management to manage more than 1,700 devices and to maintain a strict separation between personal and professional applications. Integrated productivity apps provide efficient mobile workflows
- Citrix Networking protects sensitive data from being accessed remotely and facilitates the secure integration of external providers and partners, allowing Hays to accelerate the development of innovative projects

“We had previously carried out extensive testing of several manufacturers’ Mobile Device Management and Mobile Application Management products,” says Guido Müller, IT Infrastructure Department Manager at Hays. “Citrix Endpoint Management’s most impressive features are its outstanding usability, error-free self-enrolment and value-added features, such as iPad support and support for Touch ID and Apple Watches.”

Citrix Endpoint Management enabled Hays to reconcile users’ wishes with the company’s security requirements. Employees may freely use the company’s new mobile devices and can download their own apps from the App Store, for example.

However, all business applications, such as Citrix Endpoint Management’s Secure Mail app, run in secure environments and are kept strictly separate from the rest of the environment. This set-up does not allow sensitive company information, such as contact details and email attachments, to be transferred to personal apps, such as by copying and pasting.

Application and desktop virtualisation is a further key element of the digital workspace strategy adopted by Hays. Using Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops, the IT department can make applications or even entire desktops rapidly available on any device, without having to physically install them. This helps to integrate external users and facilitates the rollout of new applications.

For efficient application management, SVA also recommended the introduction of Citrix App Layering. This allows apps to be completely separated from the underlying operating system, making it quick and simple to use them on different platforms. “The virtualisation of apps even helps Hays to reduce its licence costs,” explains Brian Monroe, Citrix Architect at SVA. “Applications such as Microsoft Project can be flexibly assigned to employees for a specific period of time. Thereafter, the licences can be used by other colleagues.”

To increase the security and availability of digital workspaces, Hays also chose to implement a Citrix networking solution. Citrix Gateway appliances now operate all external access to internal resources. These encrypt the entire communication between client and servers. Access is protected through a multi-step user authentication process. “By using context-based security functions, we are also able to ensure that certain content can only be accessed from within the office itself,” explains Johannes Leuschner.

In the data centre, Citrix ADCs act as load balancers and guarantee the high availability of the Citrix infrastructure. This means that users can continue to access their digital workspace, even if individual components have failed.

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Johannes Leuschner
Head of Hays Lab
Hays AG

Higher productivity thanks to greater user focus

Now, if a new employee starts work at Hays, they can access all the resources they need to carry out their work right from the very start. All the relevant applications and services are automatically assigned to them on the desktop. The configuration of their mobile device will also be largely automatic. The user unpacks their smartphone, registers using their company email address, and Citrix Endpoint Management automatically downloads all the necessary security settings onto the device. In the Hays App Store, the employee can then select the apps they'd like to install. Alongside Citrix Endpoint Management productivity apps such as Secure Mail, Secure Web and Secure Tasks, the App Store also has a range of additional business applications, such as Skype for Business, WebEx or the travel-expenses tool, Concur.

“We've experienced a very high degree of user acceptance from the very start. That's because the mobile digital workspace simplifies a lot of processes for users,” says Johannes Leuschner. For instance, taxi or restaurant receipts can be logged and transferred to a travel expense claim while employees are still on the road. Using the IDnow app, Hays employees are able to confirm a candidate's identity during their interview. In the future, it will also be possible to record interviews digitally and store them seamlessly in the CRM system. The latest mobile workflows therefore raise user productivity and relieve them of routine tasks.

Accelerating innovation through flexible collaboration with partners

These days, virtual desktops play a significant role in collaborative work with external partners. “For instance, in a very short time, we were able to integrate a 15-strong team of developers in India into our software development project,” says Guido Müller. “The users there could access our development environment, Visual Studio, while working with their own hardware. All data remained exclusively in our data centre.”

Feedback from external partners has been exceptionally good: Citrix Virtual Desktops and Apps facilitates fluid working using centrally available applications, even over considerable distances. Citrix ADC allows Hays to continually monitor reaction times, making it easy to intervene quickly if system failures or fluctuations in performance arise.

Reduction in IT workload and easier expansion

There has been a tangible reduction in the IT department's administrative workload as a result of the centralised management of applications, desktops and mobile devices. New applications and updates can now be rolled out very quickly across the entire company – time-consuming software installations on devices have been confined to the past. The number of support tickets has also reduced significantly in the new environment.

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Alongside the Citrix solutions, SVA also installed a hyperconverged Nutanix infrastructure for Hays. “The Nutanix platform is ideal for running high-performing, highly automated and demanding workloads, such as a VDI solution,” says Brian Monroe. “It now takes less than ten seconds to log-on to the virtual desktops.”

Nutanix’s integrated deduplication technology provides highly efficient storage – ideal for a rapidly expanding company like Hays. The Nutanix platform’s simple scalability also has benefits for the planned expansion of the recruitment agency’s VDI environment. If greater processing power and storage are required for additional virtual desktops, the IT department simply adds another node to the Nutanix cluster.

Outlook: new workspace models are being tested

Managers at Hays have already given thought to what a further development of the new work strategy might look like. Consideration is being given to creating a more flexible organisation of office space in the future. For instance, Hays would like to gradually do away with the allocation of fixed workspaces in new branches and to test shared desk models instead. This should be easy to achieve from a technical perspective, as using virtual applications and desktops is already no longer location or device-dependent.

“The Citrix solution works so well that the IT aspects of the digital workspace are increasingly receding into the background,” summarises Johannes Leuschner. “Instead, our main focus is now on issues relating to the interface between technology and business, such as the shape that our corporate culture will take going forwards. As a key solutions provider, SVA plays a major part in our strategy’s success.”

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