TCO is not all about Hardware

By Paul R. Honor

We have all heard the TCO arguments for adopting a Terminal Server strategy over and over again and the bottom line is it is a valid argument and hard to refute. But the flaw in most of the proposals is that they concentrate on extending the life of desktop hardware and reducing the cost of application deployment and management. There is another facet that can really tip the scales in the direction of Terminal Services, that facet is License Management.

Citrix MetaFrame XPe Feature Release 2 introduced amongst other things a license manager, which allows the administrator to restrict the number of connections a server farm will accept to any given application, the flaw here being that XPe is the top of the range product.

The recently introduced New Moon Systems Canaveral iQ has this feature built into the core of the product, along with some very useful reporting tools.

How does this feature work in practice? The following examples are similar for both the Citrix and New Moon products although for simplicity I will concentrate on the New Moon Canaveral iQ product.

Microsoft Office Products

All Microsoft Office products (including the required Terminal Services CALs) are licensed on a named user basis, i.e. per client desktop and not per-connection. In other words, any client device that the customer is planning to run MS Office on requires a license, whether or not the respective user actually connects to the Terminal Server or whether it is a Microsoft, Citrix MetaFrame or New Moon Canaveral iQ server.

New Moon Canaveral iQ has a built-in report that can be very helpful to you in this regard. It can tell you which client devices have ever accessed a specific application, so to stay in compliance you will need to have that many licenses for the application. But you don't need any extras, for example.

Application Name	Client Computer Count
Outlook	116
Word	87

Excel	69
PowerPoint	29
Notepad	60
Internet Explorer	54

(I know this is all in Microsoft Office but it makes the point)

When we look at the above report we can see that in this specific period "Microsoft Outlook" was accessed from 116 computers; therefore this organization will need to own 116 client licenses for Outlook, but significantly less for the other applications. With License Management such as this the organization does not need a license for all "Potential" connections but only for the client machines that were used to make those connections.

The only downside is this report is generated AFTER a period of usage, and licenses are bought BEFORE using the applications, so this report is more useful in predicting the next period's license requirements intelligently. Nevertheless for large corporate users the savings can be enormous.

Software as a Service

You can go much further though, the Canaveral iQ report tool allows you to drill down and find who the users are, how long they used the application for, how often they use it, and when they used it. Not only does that give you the ability to see if each of the connections was worth paying a license for i.e. One user only used PowerPoint once for a total of 20 minutes during the report period so why are you paying a license fee for that user. This offers the IT service providers the ability to consider charging departments on a per use basis for their IT services, this will not only move away from the always contentious practice of charging each department a flat rate for IT but it also allows departments to actually see what they use and what they waste. Once again the net result is most likely to be a reduction in the number of applications used and consequently a reduction in license requirements. Treat software as a service and not as a right and you save money, even more so when we look at per-connection licensing.

Per Connection Licenses

The situation is different with applications that are licensed on a per connection basis, for example ERP applications like JD Edwards One World because New Moon Canaveral iQ has a unique feature that can save your organization lots of money, it is a License Limit setting. I will stick with the JD Edwards (JDE) product for this example because I know it well and this works. You publish the JDE client from the

Canaveral iQ Application Servers and set the license limit so that only 50 connections are allowed at any time. The result is that even if you have 5 or 6 servers in the team publishing JD Edwards One World only 50 concurrent connections can be made from across your organization. This does not mean only 50 people get access to One World simply that only 50 people at any one time get access to One World. Let's take a small company who has 150 people all using an application like this every day, but most of who only use it occasionally. In this case the reports will show exactly who is using what, when and for how long allowing you to reduce the number of licenses you own dramatically. Scale these figures up to corporate level and once again the savings are going to be impressive.

Just from this one example you can see that when you start to look at what applications your organization is using these figures will start to add up. Oracle licenses are connection based, as are Goldmine, Sage, SAP, Exchequer and so on, the list is long.

Conclusions

Moving to a Terminal Server based system is not an easy move initially, the politics involved can be problematical with individual departments wanting to own their applications. However the bottom line is that they are wasting your organization's money.

Also just because they are called Terminal Servers that does not mean the users have to get rid of their workstations, both Citrix and New Moon publish icons to the users desktop meaning that the user can carry on using the PC as before, but the applications they are using are now on the terminal servers and all the licenses and their usage are under control.

Terminal Services have come a long way since Citrix introduced WinFrame, now with Citrix MetaFrame XP and New Moon Canaveral iQ the benefits of application publishing are much more compelling than simply reducing hardware TCO and the costs of maintaining desktops. With this technology you can now bring down the costs of all your IT services across the enterprise.

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