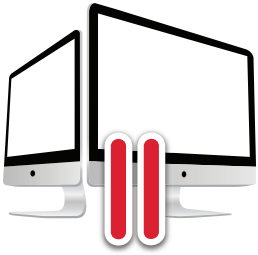


CASE STUDY



Business Situation Summary

- A two-person IT team supports a 200+ machine, Mac-only environment for an online luxury brand retailer and fashion website.
- Employees in several departments occasionally need to run Windows applications and development tools.
- A stable computing environment and fast fixes are essential to maximize operational uptimes.

Solution Summary

- On machines needing Windows, deployed Parallels Desktop Business Edition for its better user environment than other virtualization alternatives

Benefits Summary

- Easy to use
- Keeps Windows stable
- Eliminates time troubleshooting by making it possible to replace Windows environment in minutes

Parallels Products Used

- Parallels Desktop Business Edition

Gilt Japan sets up a Mac OS X®-exclusive environment in which key departmental teams run Parallels Desktop for Mac Business Edition

Move maximizes equipment uptimes while improving efficiency and productivity

Gilt Groupe K.K. is based in Ginza, Tokyo's glittering high-end fashion district. This online luxury brand retailer and fashion website enables members to access its online fashion sales through its advanced mobile-first website, iOS, and Android™ apps. Gilt, a New York-based online luxury brand retailer and fashion website, established this company in 2008.

Gilt has more than two million members in Japan. The site allows users to view and purchase merchandise through the Mac OS®, Windows®, iOS, and Android platforms. Gilt has earned a solid reputation for offering an array of exclusive, attractively priced items from women's, men's, and kids' designer fashion labels as well as luxury home goods. Its Gilt City service offers members coveted access to an array of exclusive experiences, from exquisite multi-course meals to luxurious massages and beauty offers, fitness classes, outdoor adventures, and tickets to sold-out plays.

Business Challenge

Andrew Robinson, the senior IT support engineer at Gilt, joined the company in 2011, when it was considerably smaller than it is now. The team comprises just two engineers supporting more than 200 MacBook Air®, MacBook Pro®, iMac®, and Mac Pro® devices for everyone in the organization—from sales and marketing to the creative department, as well as those in business intelligence and analytics, merchandising, and fashion photography.

The company was already running on an all-Mac infrastructure, but personnel in several key departments needed access to Oracle and other Windows-specific applications, notably some development tools and Microsoft® Office suite apps like Excel®, which has long barely resembled the Mac® versions.

“Virtualizing Windows keeps it stable. We don't have to modify the Windows environment much to make it work, and that's because of Parallels. It gives us more time to handle bigger and more important infrastructure tasks.”

— Andrew Robinson, Senior IT Support Engineer at Gilt Groupe K.K.

The IT team considered either buying Windows-based machines, thereby having a mixed operating system environment, or using virtual machines inside the Macintosh® host operating system.

The team chose the latter because Robinson had found through experience elsewhere that Windows® tends to perform more stably on Mac than on Wintel machines and therefore offers a higher return on investment over three to five years, more than recouping a higher upfront cost.

Solution

Boot Camp® was not an option for the IT team because it requires lengthy reboots. Gilt encourages its employees to use both Windows and Mac applications, zipping into Windows when necessary and quickly returning to a Mac OS environment, allowing them to accomplish what they need to do efficiently and productively.

After careful evaluation, including consideration of other virtualization environments, the IT team concluded that Parallels Desktop® for Mac Business Edition would be a far better fit for most of its employees because it focuses on the end-user and provides a seamless computing setup.

“I’m here to ensure the infrastructure is stable and easy to use and is up and working. I pick and choose the tools that can do that with a small team. Parallels is one of those tools, and we’re very happy with it.”

— Andrew Robinson

Results

Select teams within the Gilt City, Finance, Merchandising Planning, Business Intelligence, Logistics, and Technology departments run Parallels Desktop Business Edition and Windows 7 Pro. (the company is evaluating the Windows 10 beta.)

The company values both Mac and Windows operating systems because they provide distinct business advantages. “If we had a heavy Windows environment, we wouldn’t have a lot of free time,” said Robinson. “Virtualizing Windows keeps it stable. We don’t have to mess around very much with the Windows environment to make it work, and that’s because of Parallels. It gives the IT team more time to handle bigger and more important infrastructure tasks.”

If Windows stops working for any reason on a particular computer, the IT team doesn’t need to spend time troubleshooting. With Parallels Desktop Business Edition, the IT team can replace the Windows environment in a matter of minutes so users can get back up and running quickly.

“My role is to provide the tools that people need to get their jobs done and do some research to introduce them to better tools rather than spending time trying to fix every little thing. I’m here to make sure the infrastructure is stable and easy to use and is up and working. I pick and choose the tools that can do that with a small team. Parallels is one of those tools, and we’re very happy with it,” concluded Robinson.

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Global Headquarters, 500 SW 39th Street, Suite 200, Renton, WA 98057 +1 425-282-6400