

COMPanion Corp

“If one of us needs another PC for testing or needs to run a different OS, it's simply a matter of launching another virtual machine – we don't have to track down an available computer with a monitor or use VNC, which even in a LAN setting can suffer from lag.”

- Bill Schjelderup, President

Country
United States

Industry
Technology

Customer Profile
Founded in 1987, COMPanion has grown to become a leader in the library, textbook, and lunchroom automation industry.

As a provider of Mac and Windows solutions, COMPanion's developers had used KVM switches to enable them to control both OSes from a single keyboard and monitor. However, as KVM switches required developers to switch between computers, COMPanion sought a new solution to provide a seamless, fully integrated working environment.

By deploying Parallels Desktop for Mac to run Windows and Mac OS X at the same time on the same machine, developers knew that they had found what they were looking for.

Company URL
www.companioncorp.com

“Everything just worked, and even compiling went as smoothly as on a PC.”

– Bill Schjelderup

Situation

Since 1987, COMPanion has developed cross-platform library, textbook, and lunchroom automation software for K-12 academic institutions, universities, and libraries. With 20 years in the industry, COMPanion prides itself on delivering cutting-edge technology to thousands of librarians, technicians, and administrators across the globe.

Because COMPanion provides client-server solutions for both Windows and Mac environments, developers had been equipped with a Mac as well as multiple PCs on which to develop and test their solutions using Windows-only TortoiseSVN, MS Visual Studio, and GlowCode development and coding software. The company's developers had been utilizing KVM switches to work on both platforms and to control multiple physical computers using a single keyboard, mouse, and monitor.

However, the KVM switches were severely limited in their ability to integrate multiple operating systems and provide a seamless working environment because they did not reduce the number of physical machines required to use multiple OSes - they only reduced the number of peripheral devices required to operate multiple physical computers.

Developers were still required to choose which operating systems to work with at any given time as KVM switches only allow the computer that is currently in use to 'see' the keyboard, mouse, and monitor. Furthermore, because the computers had to maintain a constant connection to the KVM switches, staff was still forced to locate a separate computer and monitor for systems testing.

Because of the inherent limitations in KVM switches, COMPanion sought a new solution that would better equip its staff to develop and test solutions as well as reduce IT costs.

Solution

When COMPanion's IT staff discovered Parallels Desktop for Mac, it saw the perfect opportunity to fully integrate the company's development systems, consolidate its hardware, and empower its employees. By outfitting each developer with an Intel-powered Mac and Parallels Desktop, COMPanion IT staff was able to simultaneously use both Mac OS X and Windows on each machine, thus eliminating the need for KVM switches.

Immediately impressed with Parallels Desktop's Installation Assistant, which made installing Windows XP easier than installing it on a PC, developers soon discovered that their critical development software worked as well (and in some cases, better!) on their new Windows virtual machines as they did on real physical machines.

Developers also no longer had to search for a separate computer and peripheral devices for testing new systems and configurations; they simply created a new customized Parallels virtual machine on their Mac.

Benefits

By standardizing on a single platform, COMPanion eliminated the need to buy dedicated Windows PCs, which significantly reduced IT costs and empowered employees with a fully integrated working environment that enabled more effective, efficient development for both Windows- and Mac-based solutions.

