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# network news

the newsletter of SICL spring 2010

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## The next wave

VDI  
Heli-Rock 15  
Data Centre Services

# Welcome...

Virtualisation is a tried and tested technology providing great benefits to most organisations in terms of cost saving, resource management and environmental impact. But hasn't everyone done this now? Surely everyone has deployed virtual servers by now, haven't they? If not then I would urge you to look at this as the market has never been more competitive. I believe the next wave of virtualisation is at the desktop; providing highly functional network computing at a much lower cost per seat, simplifying the desktop environment, making it easier to manage and avoiding costly asset replacement programmes.

There are now clearly defined leaders in virtualisation; VMware has been a market leader for the past few years but Microsoft is fast catching up and Citrix too has some very capable virtualisation

technologies. SICL can offer any or all of these along with truly unbiased and objective opinions on suitability for any organisation.

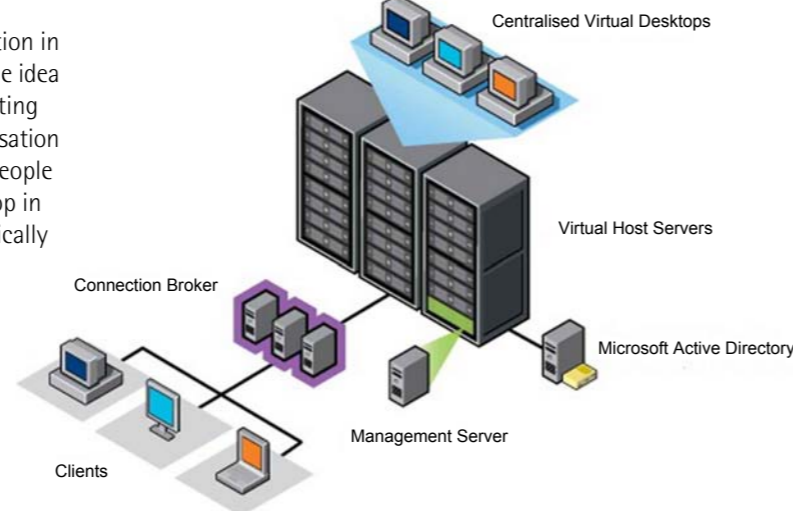
Virtualisation is also not confined to server and desktop; Virtual switch and security environments are now tried and trusted technologies being widely adopted in data centres. SICL has recently invested in Cisco VSS and associated technologies and skills.

In this newsletter issue we discuss the next wave of virtualisation - VDI. Thank you for your continuing business.

**Cliff Fox**  
Managing Director  
March 2010

## VDI - The next wave of virtualisation

VDI or Virtual Desktop Infrastructure is getting significant attention in the press, but what is it really all about? At the most basic level the idea is simple, instead of giving a person a local PC running an operating system and applications, virtualising the desktop allows an organisation to run operating systems and applications from a data-centre. People then connect to and control their own instance of virtual desktop in a one-to-one manner from whichever device is appropriate, typically terminals and PC's.



### Why use VDI?

The major question facing organisations considering implementing a VDI solution is why do it? There can be significant advantages with VDI and an organisation should consider each of these carefully:

**Cost savings** - in any organisation at some point the desktop estate will need to be refreshed regardless of the operating systems and applications. This is often a financial burden and a time consuming exercise for all involved and the effect of a new desktop roll-out can have an adverse impact on normal day to day running. There are also savings in administration costs. Implementing a VDI solution with thin client terminals typically involves lower purchase cost with significantly longer life-span.

**Management savings** - physical management of desktops within an organisation by IT departments is a time consuming process as reported faults with each individual PC has to be managed locally at the location of the desktop. This often becomes a time consuming exercise for IT managers and technicians and the time spent managing and fixing desktop users issues locally often impacts strategic projects. Patch management and version updates can also be avoided saving significant system management time.

**Security** - security is a key element in VDI. Organisations have greater control of how they secure their desktop. You can lock down the image from external devices or prevent copying data from the image to the local device. Remote or mobile users also benefit as sensitive data is stored on the server in the data-centre and not on the local device, therefore if a device is stolen then sensitive information is protected.

**VDI image** - VDI enables an organisation to create a library of VDI images to meet all of the company needs. If third-party vendors/contractors/consultants work onsite, VDI enables them to use secure/encrypted/locked-down images to allow them to work in your environment in a controlled manner.

**Reduce carbon footprint** - a thin client VDI session typically uses less electricity than a desktop computer which not only benefits the environment but also saves in utility costs.

There are many success stories of organisations that have taken the decision to virtualise their desktop infrastructure. One particular example includes an organisation with over 1,500 users. As a result of VDI they realised a 20% reduction in IT administration time, a 15% decrease in IT support calls and an increase in data security to meet compliance requirements. Financial savings are being calculated over the first year but are expected to be significant.

### Vendor solutions:



Citrix XenDesktop is a desktop virtualisation solution that delivers a complete desktop experience as an on-demand service to any user, anywhere. XenDesktop can quickly and securely deliver individual applications or complete desktops while providing a high-definition user experience. XenDesktop provides customers with: HDX user experience, FlexCast Delivery, Open architecture and On-demand apps by XenApp.

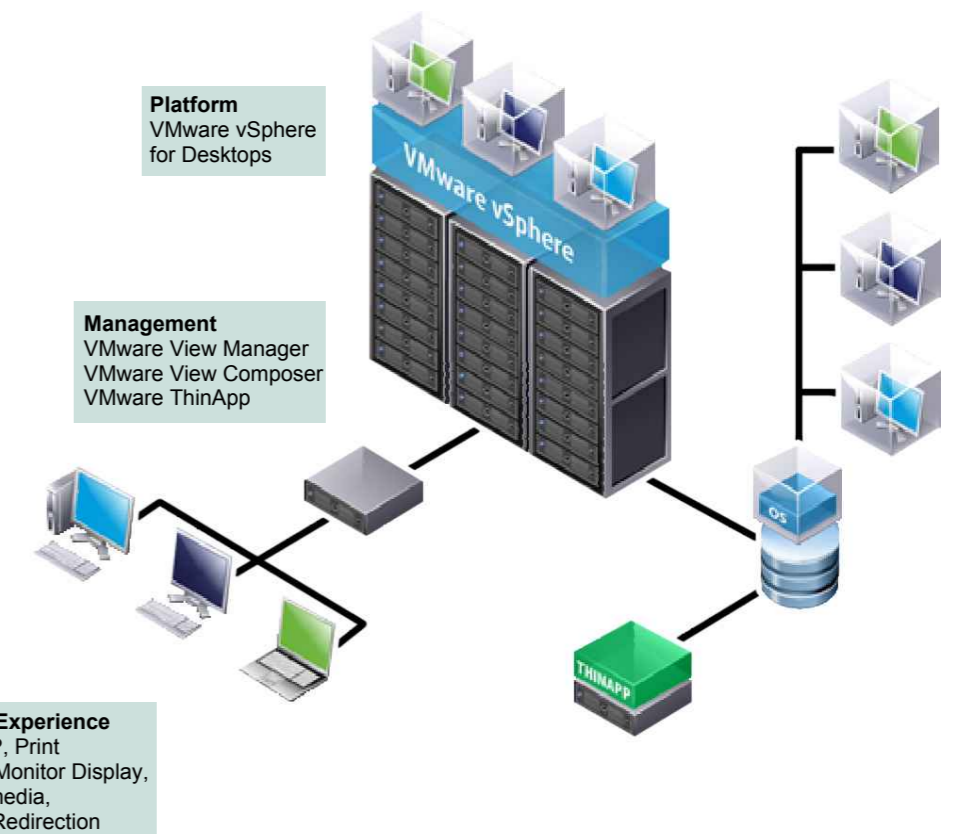


As a leading client-hosted desktop virtualisation technology, Microsoft Virtual PC lets you create separate virtual machines on your Windows desktop—each of which virtualises the hardware of a complete physical computer—and switch between them as easily as switching applications—with a mouse click.

Microsoft Application Virtualisation (App-V) transforms applications into centrally-managed virtual services that are never installed and don't conflict with other applications.



VMware View 4 allows you to consolidate virtual desktops on datacenter servers and manage operating systems, applications and data independently for greater business agility while providing a flexible high performance desktop experience for end users, over any network. The end result allows streamline desktop management, deployment, maintenance and support while improving efficiency through automated desktop





## SICL 'Heli-Rock 15'

A huge thank you to everyone that supported SICL's 15th Anniversary, which took place on Friday 8th January 2010 at Grattan Stadium, Bradford. We sold 275 tickets for the event and raised over £3,500.00 for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance from advance ticket sales and raffles on the night, and the money is still coming in. The Just Giving Site is still open for further donations - [www.justgiving.com/SICL-YAA](http://www.justgiving.com/SICL-YAA) - any donations large or small are greatly appreciated. The photo galleries are available from your SICL Account Manager and we will be passing those out to you, especially your photos with Ozzy Osbourne. A big thank you to all those involved, not least 'Clear' who were simply brilliant on the night.



## New Year: New Staff



### Andrew Holding

Andrew is CCIE veteran (#3630) and data centre specialist. In his former role at BT he was the leading design authority on design and deployment of data centre solutions, principally Cisco ACE and virtual switch system environments. A previous 8 year Cisco career involved design authority on critical projects for Reuters, GlaxoSmithKline and the NHS.



### Chris Powell

Chris has held a consultative account management role providing IT solutions and has specialised in server & storage, disaster recovery and security projects. In a career spanning over 25 years, he has won and account managed large commercial, industrial and financial clients.



### Samantha Paylor

Sam holds a 1st Class Honours degree in Computing and her most recent experience prior to joining SICL was working for West Yorkshire Joint Services in IT Support and Development. Her experience includes Network and Server Administration, C# development in addition to implementing and supporting thin client infrastructure.

### • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS •

SICL are pleased to announce a new addition to the team - Kevin Ward, Cisco Voice Engineer, who will be joining our technical department on 1st March 2010.

## Data Centre Services

SICL has recently invested in specialist advanced Data Centre skills. This brings many years experience of designing and supporting advanced, mission-critical, data centres in the world's largest networks to SICL customers. These skills are now being supplemented by training in Data Centre Advanced technologies for existing staff.



## British Computer Society Award



SICL were pleased to receive an award in the 'Community Project of the Year' at the annual British Computing Society UK IT industry awards, on 12th November.

The award recognised the work done for Yorkshire Air Ambulance, who provide life-saving, rapid response medical care and has helped rescue thousands of patients in the region.

## Coming soon...

