



“After comparing the cost of replacing our existing IT infrastructure with deploying the Citrix MetaFrame solution, it’s clear that Rubbermaid Europe has saved more than US \$200,000 by choosing MetaFrame.”

—Tom Arentsen, Project Leader, Rubbermaid Europe

Rubbermaid Puts its House in Order with Citrix MetaFrame

Solution Overview

Company

Rubbermaid Europe is one of the best known global brands in housewares, food storage and plastic goods. Rubbermaid Europe is part of the United States-based Newell Rubbermaid Inc., with annual sales exceeding US\$6.4 billion.

Challenge

Rubbermaid Europe needed to provide employees throughout Europe with fast, reliable access to the latest business and productivity applications to enhance customer service and sustain its competitive edge. However, the company also needed to preserve the value of its legacy PCs and maintain a small IT staff.

Solution

Rubbermaid Europe worked with UF Solutions, a Gold Solutions Provider of the Citrix Solutions Network and Citrix Authorized Learning Centre (CALC), to implement Citrix MetaFrame with Microsoft Windows Terminal Server software.

Benefits

The Citrix solution has saved Rubbermaid Europe approximately US\$200,000 that would otherwise have been spent replacing and supporting over 600 desktop PCs at sites around Europe. IT support costs have also been reduced by more than US\$300,000 per year through MetaFrame’s centralised administration and enterprise management tools. System uptime has increased to 99 percent, vastly improving customer service to clients.

Rubbermaid is one of the best known global brands in housewares, food storage and plastic goods, and its products have an enviable reputation for quality and durability. Headquartered in Waterloo, Belgium and with offices throughout Europe, Rubbermaid Europe is part of the United States-based Newell Rubbermaid Inc., with annual sales exceeding US\$6.4 billion.

To maintain competitiveness, Rubbermaid Europe needed to provide employees with fast and reliable access to the latest business and office applications, but was faced with a huge task in modernising its legacy IT systems. To meet its goals, the company implemented a world-class computing solution based on Citrix® MetaFrame™ and Microsoft® Windows NT® Server 4.0, Terminal Server Edition software. The new computing solution delivered substantial cost savings and a greater competitive edge for the global corporation.

The Challenge: A Modern IT System for a Global Corporation

Rubbermaid Europe employs over 3,000 staff in seventeen offices as far afield as the UK, Spain, France, Poland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Hungary and Germany. Employees including sales, finance and customer service staff in all these countries needed access to a variety of standard office, accounting and other applications. But Rubbermaid’s ageing stock of PCs, which included 386 and 486-based computers, and its extensive system of local area networks, were rapidly becoming unmanageable for the company’s small IT department.

In short, the company’s entire computer infrastructure needed replacing. Yet a huge hardware and software installation project, plus support and maintenance of PCs, would have been extremely costly and unfeasible for Rubbermaid’s in-house

IT staff. According to Tom Arentsen, Rubbermaid Europe’s Project Leader, “We needed a standardised office solution across Europe, but we had a large number of legacy PCs and we didn’t want to spend a fortune upgrading them. We wondered how it would be possible to reconcile the two.”

Implementing Citrix MetaFrame Application Server Software

Arentsen was aware of Citrix MetaFrame application server software and believed it might offer a solution to Rubbermaid’s predicament. He contacted Netherlands-based UF Solutions, a Gold Solutions Provider of the Citrix Solutions Network™ and Citrix Authorized Learning Centre™ (CALC), and together they devised a solution to meet Rubbermaid’s requirements.

Rubbermaid and UF Solutions implemented Citrix MetaFrame with Microsoft Terminal Server software to deliver a comprehensive server-based solution to over 760 Rubbermaid staff in nine sites around Europe. The servers were configured in mini “server farms” which consisted of two Citrix servers, each providing users with access to Microsoft Office Professional, Microsoft Project, Adobe Acrobat, SAP R/3, Movex Explorer, Winzip and other specialist DOS-based and 16-bit Windows-based applications. Citrix’s Load Balancing Services dynamically routes users to the least-busy server at each site to deliver the best application performance and server resource utilisation.

The MetaFrame-based solution has eliminated Rubbermaid’s need to replace its installed base of PCs; staff continue to use their existing PCs, converted into high speed graphical terminals with the installation of inexpensive EaziTC cards and Winlinx terminals made by VXL Instruments. These terminal cards contain all the operating system, graphics and networking capabilities the PCs need to



work as Citrix client terminals and need almost no support or administration.

Substantial Hard Cost Savings Realised

“Rubbermaid has saved more than US\$200,000 in IT infrastructure costs thanks to our MetaFrame computing solution,” noted Bernhard Goovaerts, IT Technical manager, Rubbermaid Europe. “With MetaFrame, we were able to avoid the enormous costs of replacing our entire existing IT infrastructure. Our IT administration cost savings have been substantial as well — instead of installing and upgrading applications on thousands of desktops, we now only have to do it on 18 servers. We also used to have numerous external consultants supporting our IT infrastructure, but now the company runs its entire European operations with just one local IT administrator per site, plus myself in the Belgium headquarters. This has resulted in savings worth more than US\$300,000 dollars per year.”

Arentsen attributes Rubbermaid’s ability to reduce IT support costs to MetaFrame’s centralised administration and advanced enterprise management tools. He observed, “Citrix Resource Management Services enables me to manage a large number of MetaFrame servers from a single, central console. It also helps me keep track of all our software licensing requirements, so the company never pays for more licenses than it needs. Our total cost of ownership has been reduced enormously as a result.” Resource Management Services provides audit trail, system monitoring, and detailed billing reports for Citrix MetaFrame and Microsoft Terminal Server platforms.

With MetaFrame’s centralised administration, Arentsen is able to install new applications and updates, and carry out maintenance throughout Europe without having to leave his desk. “With a standard PC-based environment you would need at least several people to administer each site, and they would

certainly have their hands full. MetaFrame enables us to give all our staff much better application support, and they benefit too because if they need specialised applications I can provide them much more quickly than I could previously.”

Benefiting Both Customers and Staff

“Our application server computing solution benefits our customers because it has proven more reliable than running applications locally on the desktop PCs,” commented Arentsen. “In the past, our legacy PCs often went down — sometimes when our customer service staff were in the middle of assisting customers. This resulted in a major inconvenience for everyone. Since we implemented MetaFrame, I’m happy to report we have uptime of about 99 percent.”

Its new computing solution has also proven popular with Rubbermaid employees, who now find application response times faster than when they were running on their desktop. In some cases, the performance improvement has proven particularly striking. “Some of our accountants handle 40Mb Excel spreadsheets with numerous macros built in. These became barely usable when they were run on the desktop, even on powerful Pentium PCs. Now our accountants can run a consolidation process that used to take all morning literally in a matter of minutes,” Arentsen said.

A Path to Future Growth

As Rubbermaid Europe continues to expand its presence in more places around the world, MetaFrame will be there to support it. The company is also now considering expanding its Citrix solution into other sites in Europe, including Hungary and Poland. Said Arentsen, “When we add a new site, we connect it to our WAN and have it up and running in a very short time without spending a fortune. There are so many advantages with Citrix MetaFrame, that for a company like ours, it’s essential for the future.”

Solution Detail

About MetaFrame

Citrix MetaFrame application server software is enabling organizations to achieve “Digital Independence”™ from the cost and complexity of traditional computing by transforming the way they deploy, manage and access applications. MetaFrame extends the functionality of Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0, Terminal Server Edition and Microsoft Windows® 2000 Servers, as well as UNIX® operating systems. It provides enterprise management and Web-enablement of applications via Citrix NFuse™ application portal software, and access from any location or device, over any network connection — wireless to Web.

Applications deployed

- Microsoft Office 97 Professional and Microsoft Project
- SAP R/3
- Adobe Acrobat
- Winzip
- Movex Explorer to access ERP system on the IBM/AS400
- Catsoft AssetPro, 16-bit accounting application
- Cosh, Flint and Shire DOS-based engineering applications
- IBM Client Access software
- Power Chute Plus for the APC UPS and Dell Openmanage for monitoring the hardware of the servers

Networking Environment

- 18 MetaFrame servers: Dell* PowerEdge 4300/4350/2450 dual Pentium III 450MHz processors, 1GB RAM
- Citrix Load Balancing Services
- Citrix Resource Management Services
- Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0, Terminal Server Edition
- Legacy 286, 386 and 486-based PCs with EaziTC terminal cards from VXL Instruments*
- Winlinx Lite from VXL Instruments
- TCP/IP LANs and WAN

**VXL Instruments, Ltd is a Premier member and Dell Computer Corporation is a Charter member of the Citrix Business Alliance program, a growing coalition of industry-leading companies from across the technology spectrum who are working closely with Citrix to broaden the scope and effectiveness of enterprise application server computing solutions.*

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