THINSCALE

THINKIOSK

Delivering Thin Client Computing
in the Enterprise

WHITE PAPER

THIN**KIOSK**

How ThinKiosk Enables Thin Client Computing in the Enterprise

Aligning business and IT

Information technology within corporate, enterprise, and commercial organizations has changed. No longer are IT teams just another department that supports the business by providing computing resources reactively. IT is now looked upon as an enabler to the business, becoming a more integrated part of the commercial decision making process of a business, looking to understand how technology can match the business requirements and proactively deliver the services to support this.

The ultimate goal is to keep the business competitive and productive, adding value to the bottom line, while at the same time keeping an eye on costs.

Delivering innovation to increase workforce productivity

To help deliver this innovation, IT teams are looking at new ways to deliver technology to aid end user productivity, often looking at extending the reach of typical static office working environments, with more flexible solutions.

The choices are numerous. Maybe a cloud-hosted solution to deliver desktops and applications as a service is the answer. Or maybe deploying some form of on-premises VDI solution or other remote desktop and app technology would benefit the business. Which ever solution is deployed there are some common themes as to why this is undertaken in the first place. Those themes being about delivering and enhancing the end user experience, manageability, security, and reducing costs.

Traditional hardware-based thin clients only provide half the answer

When deploying remote solutions, careful consideration needs to be given to how an end user will connect to their remote resources, how to maintain a familiar end user experience, and what device to use. Often thin client hardware is the device of choice, but that is very static in nature and doesn't offer the flexibility organizations and end users demand.

Deploying any new technology within an organization could lead to a drop in productivity, and so any impact to the end users needs to be minimal and non-disruptive. This is where ThinScale and ThinKiosk software-defined thin clients can help, and solve the challenges faced by businesses today in deploying remote solutions.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise

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Convert PCs & laptops into thin clients

Deliver flexible, secure, low-cost thin client computing environments

Why ThinKiosk? ThinKiosk is a software-defined solution that takes existing Windows devices, either PCs, laptops, or existing thin client devices, and repurposes them into secure, centrally managed, Windows-based thin clients, that deliver a familiar look and feel for end users.

The operating system of the underlying device is locked down when the ThinKiosk thin client boots and delivers end users a secure workspace environment, with a familiar Windows-style look and feel user interface, from where they can access both remote environments, VDI and published applications, as well as local applications.

There is no need to dual boot, or boot from external USB device, making for an extremely easy and usable solution. In addition, ThinKiosk also enables a number of advanced management features designed to simplify management and enhance security protecting both the end users and your entire organization.

SOFTWARE-DEFINED

ThinKiosk software-defined thin clients turn your existing Windows devices into thin clients without overwriting them, dual booting, or booting from USB.

LOWER COSTS

Educational establishments can utilize hardware they already own, so with a ThinKiosk solution the cost is purely for the software license, as there is no need to purchase new thin client devices.

SECURE WORKSPACE ENVIRONMENT

ThinKiosk locks down the underlying device OS, replacing it with a Windows-style, intuitive, secure workspace, allowing students to access learning resources.

FAMILIAR END USER EXPERIENCE

The key to any successful solution is giving students something they are used to already using. ThinKiosk provides a seamless transition to remote solutions, coupled with a familiar, customizable UI.

FAST & SIMPLE DEPLOYMENT

ThinKiosk is Windows-based and is easily deployed to existing devices, turning them into managed, secure thin clients in a matter of minutes. No need for rebooting or dual-booting.

CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT

The secure workspace environment is managed centrally using the ThinScale Management Platform, allowing IT admins to ensure that the environment is configured securely, and up to date.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise: Features

Secure existing devices with full lock-down

Booting up a repurposed device denies the end user from having access to the underlying Windows operating system of the device, rendering it disabled, preventing them from accessing any device settings, ensuring it remains secure

Instead of the usual desktop interface of the Windows OS, they will access a secure workspace environment, a simple, easy to navigate user interface from where they can connect to their remote environments securely. They also have the ability to access local applications if they have the relevant permission from IT to do so, allowing seamless migration to a remote desktop or published application environment by enabling legacy applications to still be used.

Block end user from plugging in USB devices

USB devices are often seen as one of the main causes security breaches and data leakage, especially within an enterprise environment. End user could plug in their own USB memory sticks and other write-enabled media devices and copy company sensitive data onto them and remove from the corporate environment.

With ThinKiosk's' configurable USB blocking feature, end users are prevented from having access to these devices stopping them from introducing potentially unsafe files and other viruses and malware onto the corporate network. This also ensures that other end users remain secure and protected.

Prevent unauthorized applications from running

The Application Execution Prevention (AEP) feature adds an additional layer of security by preventing end users from running unauthorized applications.

Employing a rules-based system, IT admins can now configure exactly which apps students are allowed launch on their ThinKiosk thin clients. These rules allow IT admins to create white/black lists which contain a comprehensive list of rule types that delivers a granular level of control over exactly which applications can and can't run. IT admins can create generic rule sets that allow all Windows OS binaries to run, or they can create a more targeted rule set that allows only those applications signed by a specific digital certificate to launch and run.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise: Features

Prevent malicious services from running

The Service Execution Prevention feature of ThinKiosk allows you to control which Windows services are allowed to run on the repurposed devices operating system. If a service is running and it does not match the defined policies, then the service will be automatically stopped. This also applies to any services that have been configured with a delayed startup, ensuring security is maintained.

Ensure devices are always up to date

ThinKiosk enables IT departments to easily control the Windows Update feature, centrally, to ensure that end users are running the correct patches an updates before connecting to the network and accessing their desktops and applications.

For IT this means they can configure how often the client devices check for any updates, and then decide when, and if to apply them. End users can also be prompted to install any of the available updates, or the updates can simply be pre-configured by the IT department to install silently, without user intervention or disruption. This ensures that the end users devices are always up to date, secure, and compliant.

Securing the network

Another security feature of ThinKiosk enables IT admins to fully configure the Windows Firewall feature automatically. They can remove any existing firewall rules, or configure new firewall rules, and manage this centrally all from the ThinScale Management Platform and the Profile Editor.

Enhancing the end user experience

The end user experience is key to productivity. ThinKiosk enhances the end user experience by delivering a familiar Windows look and feel coupled with an intuitive secure workspace user interface that enable fast and easy access to virtual desktop and published application environments. It also allows end users to have access to locally installed applications (based on admin set policy) should they need to work offline.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise: Features

Delivering legacy & modern applications

Legacy applications still play a huge part in today's corporate environments, although in reality there is nothing legacy about them and they are still relevant, and very much in use. However, not all of these apps can be delivered remotely or published. Also they may not be supported using virtual infrastructure, so how do you embrace the old and move to the new simultaneously?

With ThinKiosk being a Windows-based solution, you have the ability to install and securely access applications locally on PC's and laptops, as well as being able to update them, and all while maintaining central management and control using ThinKiosk policy templates to ensure security.

Being locally installed means that apps can run regardless of whether an end user can connect to a network to access remote systems. The device will remain usable, even when offline, meaning it doesn't disrupt end user productivity.

End user experience – Magic Filter

As part of the overall enhanced end user experience, ThinKiosk employs a unique feature called Magic Filter. Magic Filter is a dynamic key press pass-through feature that traps local keystrokes such as Ctrl + Alt + Del and Windows + L, and passes them directly through to the remote environment, just as if the user was working locally on their device.

This unique feature delivers an enhanced end user experience as the end users have a native Windows feel when using their ThinKiosk thin client.
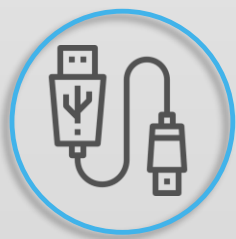
Compatibility with peripheral devices

Maintaining compatibility with existing Windows-based hardware is a core requirement. Often Linux-based thin client alternatives are unable to connect with existing peripherals such as specialized printers, production line equipment, multi-screens, and unified communication devices such as headsets and mics.

Using existing Windows-based devices and repurposing them as ThinKiosk Windows-based software-defined thin clients ensures that hardware compatibility is maintained, appropriate device drivers are still available, and therefore guaranteeing device operation and compatibility.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise: Features

Scalable enterprise architecture

Converting existing Windows devices with ThinKiosk enables you to scale and convert thousands of Windows-based devices into centrally managed ThinKiosk software-defined thin clients, managed from the ThinScale Management Platform.

As a software-defined solution, ThinKiosk delivers flexible scalability and as such it supports any Windows-based device, from any vendor, therefore avoiding any potential lock-in. New devices can be simply deployed and configured in minutes by applying the already configured policies and profiles.

The ThinScale Management Platform is designed to support a distributed client environment, allowing you to manage both HQ offices and remote branch office locations, as well as remote workers, all using a single management console.

Simple & fast deployment

ThinKiosk is a software-defined, Windows-based solution and for IT admins is just a simple case of deploying the ThinKiosk Client application onto the Windows PC's laptops, and thin clients and allowing it to launch as the device boots. Being a Windows based solution, IT admins can take advantage of all their current software deployment methods, without modification. The environment then becomes fully manageable by using the centralized ThinScale Management Platform and the admin console.

There is no need to reboot, have a dual-boot environment, or plug in a USB stick to access their secure workspace environment. They are then able to easily connect to their remote desktop and application environments using the icons delivered via the central policies and profiles.

Location awareness

In business environments today, end users are no longer always based from the same office, and often connect from different office locations. How do you manage how these end users connect to the right environment from wherever they are working from?

ThinKiosk has location awareness fully integrated. It's contextually aware when it comes to the locations from where end users are connecting from, applying the right policy and access to the right resources from their current location.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise: Features

Simplified management & support

ThinKiosk allows IT admins to not only control, manage, and update the converted thin client devices, but also the software running on them. They also have access to a range of advanced management features allowing them to manage and configure Windows Security, Firewall and Windows patching.

IT admins also have the ability to deliver remote support such as issuing power commands, remote logoff, shut down and restart, as well as being able to update ThinKiosk policies on the fly. All delivered remotely and without the need for a deskside visit, and therefore reducing support costs.

Secure & managed web browsing

ThinKiosk Client, has its own integrated web browser, complete with a fully customizable user interface. It allows end users to securely browse internal or external internet sites based on policy set by the IT department.

ThinKiosk use cases in the Enterprise
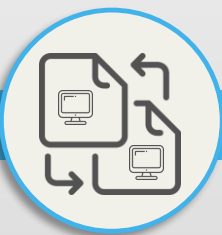
Seamless migration

Move to VDI & published apps

Ensure a smooth and seamless migration to virtual desktop and published app environments with no disruption to end users.

ThinKiosk offers end users a familiar workspace environment with a Windows look and feel, giving the users that comfortable feeling when moving from a physical desktop environment to a virtual environment. This not only increases their productivity but it also lowers the support overheads for the IT admins.

Extend device lifecycles

No need to purchase new devices

Converting existing Windows devices into ThinKiosk thin clients mean you no longer have to replace your current devices as part of your migration to virtual desktop and published app solutions. Simply convert the existing devices and extend their usable life.

Devices can then be replaced as and when, using cheaper alternatives and turn them into ThinKiosk thin clients complete with security and centralized management as standard.


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What is ThinKiosk ?

ThinKiosk is a software-defined thin client solution that repurposes existing Windows PC or laptops, and existing Windows-based thin client into centrally managed, secure thin clients. Students and teaching staff are presented with a secure workspace environment from where they can launch virtual desktops and apps from.

How does ThinKiosk work?

ThinKiosk is a Windows-based, software defined, highly scalable PC to thin client conversion solution that installs onto an existing Windows-based device, turning it into a locked-down Windows-based thin client.

By converting existing devices into thin clients, extends the life of your existing hardware and provides a cost-effective alternative to hardware based thin clients. It also delivers a fully managed, secure thin client environment reducing support costs and helpdesk calls.

Form an end users perspective they are presented with a unified end user experience With it's lightweight intuitive user interface, ThinKiosk provides students and teaching staff with a secure workspace from where they can access their remote and local desktop and application environments from, either on or off campus.
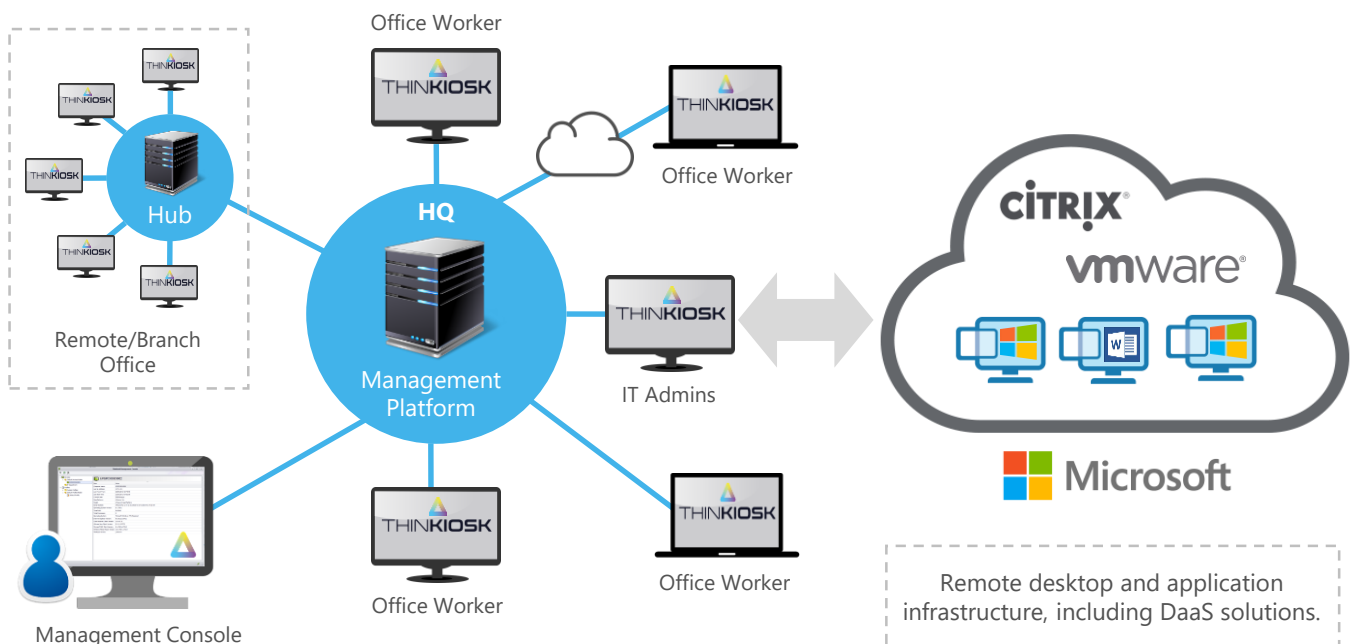
Architecture-wise, Hub Servers can be deployed in remote campus locations to manage their own locally deployed ThinKiosk thin clients, acting as software deployment points, and reducing the amount of data sent between campus locations when deploying software packages, updates, and policies to the clients.

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ThinKiosk in the Enterprise

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ThinKiosk for Enterprise: Summary

ThinKiosk is a Windows-based, software defined, scalable PC to thin client conversion solution that delivers a unified end user experience on all converted end points. It turns your existing Windows PC's into secure, centrally managed Windows-based thin clients, dramatically reducing hardware and management costs, while also improving the end user experience.

With it's lightweight intuitive user interface, ThinKiosk provides end users with a secure workspace environment from where they can access their remote and local desktop and application environments from.

Windows-based thin clients

Take full advantage of all the features and benefits that using Windows-based thin client devices deliver. If it works on Windows then it will work with ThinKiosk thin clients.

Multi-display support

ThinKiosk supports the same number of displays that are supported by the end point device, and the underlying Windows operating system, and has it's own display control applet.

Policy & profile driven

IT administrators can configure profiles defining how a ThinKiosk thin client behaves. The profiles define settings from appearance settings, through to security settings.

Secure workspace environment

ThinKiosk locks down the underlying operating system of the device and in it's place delivers end users a secure workspace environment from where they can access apps and services from.

Familiar end user experience

ThinKiosk thin clients deliver a familiar and intuitive secure user interface, with a Windows look & feel, along with enhanced productivity features.

Centralized management

Manage you entire converted thin client device estate using a single management platform with a single pane of glass administration console.

Speed up end user onboarding

Installation takes minutes, and is as simple as deploying the ThinScale Management Platform and the ThinKiosk Client on your endpoints. No need to boot from USB, or dual boot devices.

Reduce cost, increase productivity

ThinKiosk thin clients enables organizations to reduce the cost of hardware acquisition, management, increases end user productivity with faster onboarding and easier support.

For more details on the features and benefits of converting your PC's into Windows-based, software defined ThinKiosk thin clients, how they work, how they fit into your corporate environment, and how ThinKiosk solves many of the use case issues faced in deliver business IT today, please visit the ThinScale website, or contact the ThinScale team to discuss your use case.

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Software solutions that enable IT to deliver the modern digital workplace without compromising on end user experience, security or performance.

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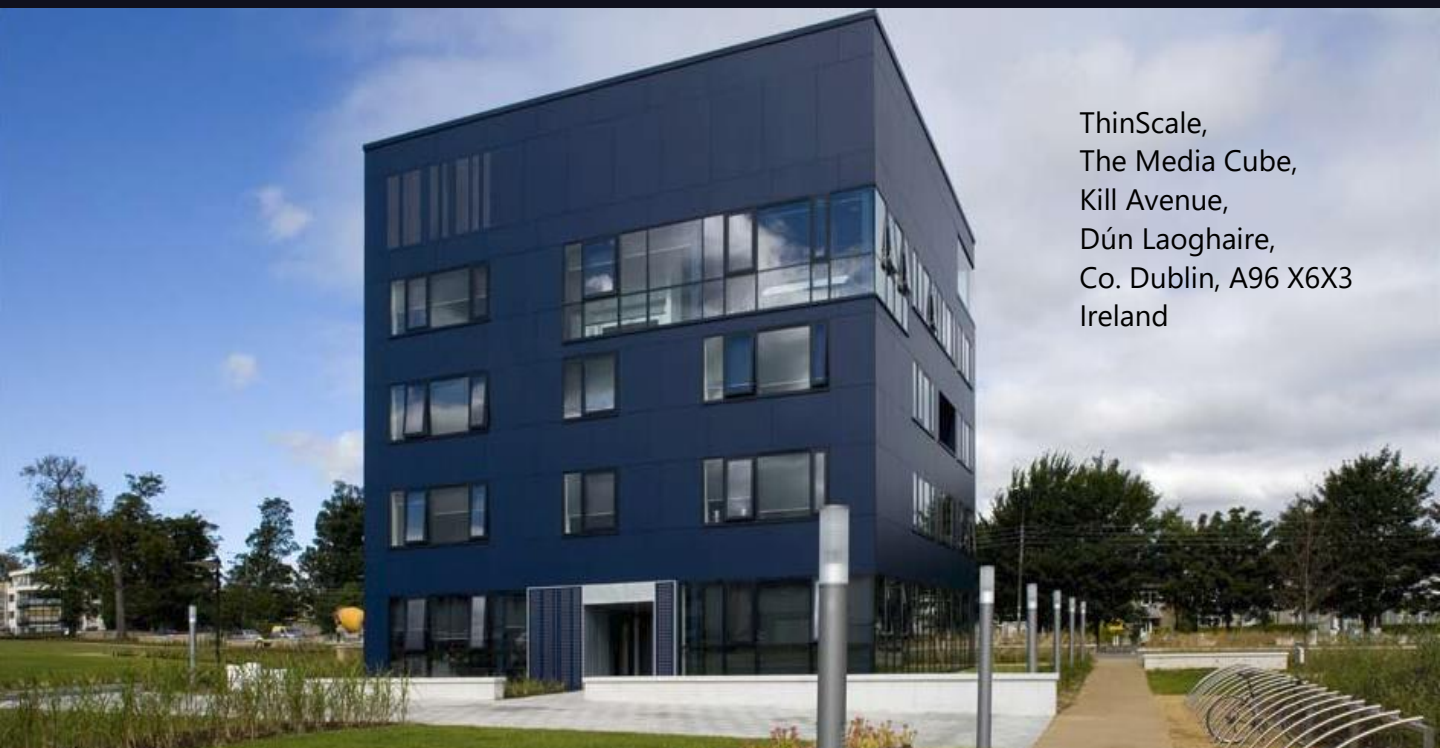IE: +353 1906 9250

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