(intel®)

Streamlining Remote Management for a Large Fleet of PCs

Intel® Core™ i5 vPro™ processors help Princess Cruises reduce downtime, cut costs, and enhance worker productivity

In 1977, Princess Cruises sailed to worldwide fame when one of its ships landed a starring role in the popular U.S. television series *The Love Boat*. Today, Princess Cruises is one of the largest global cruise lines, carrying more than a million passengers each year to more than 300 ports and destinations around the world. The company uses more than 6,000 geographically dispersed PCs to handle a full range of business tasks, from customer booking to financial management. Recently, Princess Cruises activated the Intel® vPro™ platform on systems equipped with Intel Core™ i5 vPro processors to reduce PC downtime, lower operating costs, improve worker productivity, and streamline PC management.

Challenges

- **Reduce energy consumption and improve worker productivity.** Ensure that computers are booted and ready to go when call center agents arrive at work. Shut down computers during off hours to minimize energy consumption.
- **Accelerate PC diagnostics and minimize downtime.** Rapidly diagnose and solve problems for geographically dispersed computers from a central location to eliminate costly deskside visits and decrease disruptions for employees.
- **Simplify PC management.** Augment remote management capabilities and deploy desktop virtualization to help simplify management of the large, global PC fleet by a small, centralized IT group.

Solution

- **Lenovo* computers with Intel Core i5 vPro processors.** Princess Cruises is activating the Intel vPro platform with Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager* (SCCM*) on its large fleet of Lenovo PCs. The computers run a variety of business applications on Windows* 7 and earlier Windows operating systems.

Technology Results

- **Reduced downtime, eliminated deskside visits.** Keyboard-Video-Mouse (KVM) Remote Control, a feature of the Intel vPro platform, and additional out-of-band management capabilities, enable IT staff to diagnose and remediate systems remotely, reducing downtime from days to under an hour and eliminating costly deskside visits.
- **Streamlined management and enhanced worker flexibility.** The Intel vPro platform helps simplify remote management while the Intel® processors facilitate desktop virtualization, which will enable IT to centrally provision PC environments and provide greater computing flexibility for workers.

Business Value

- **Reduced costs.** Administrators can shut down computers when they are not in use, saving the company money. Streamlining management enables the IT group to continue to manage a large PC fleet with a small staff.
- **Improved productivity.** The IT group can boot systems before employees arrive to help make sure the computers are ready to work as soon as users are.
- **Strong customer service.** By minimizing PC downtime, the IT group can help call-center agents, shipboard IT professionals, and other employees stay focused on delivering exceptional, consistent customer service.

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"With the Intel® vPro™ platform, we can access distant PCs remotely, without requiring help from users. Instead of mail-in repairs or deskside visits that can take days to schedule, now we can solve problems in less than an hour."

*– Liberty Rooney,
PC Support Analyst,
Princess Cruises*

Princess Cruises maintains a fleet of 16 ships and several thousand PCs, which are used for everything from booking customer reservations in call centers to enabling executives to deliver business presentations while traveling. "We have nearly 3,000 desktops and laptops located in offices around the world, plus another 3,000 systems on-board ships," says Gene Dextre, IT supervisor at Princess Cruises. "It is very challenging for our small IT group to manage all of those systems from a single location in the United States."

When problems arise with distant PCs, the IT group depends first on users themselves

Intel vPro platform aids centralized management of a global PC fleet

and then on third-party service providers for assistance. "We try to work with users to diagnose and repair issues over the phone, but language barriers and varying technical skill levels can make that difficult," says Liberty Rooney, PC support analyst for Princess Cruises. "Often, the remote offices need to send systems to repair centers, or we have to hire local technicians to make costly deskside visits. In both cases, users might experience several days of downtime. To minimize work disruptions and cut costs, we needed better remote diagnostic and remediation capabilities."

The IT group also saw an opportunity for employing remote power management for several hundred computers used in the company's call centers. "We want the ability to shut down computers in our call centers during off hours to reduce energy consumption and save money," says Rooney. "But we also need to make sure computers are booted and ready to go by the time that call-center agents arrive for work."

Enhancing Remote PC Management with the Intel vPro Platform

The Princess Cruises IT group standardized on Intel Core vPro processors for its Lenovo desktops and laptops several years ago, so it was an easy decision to activate the built-in Intel vPro platform to improve remote PC management. "The Intel Core vPro processors provide the performance we need for a full range of business applications," says Dextre. "By capitalizing on the Intel vPro platform, we can augment our existing remote management capabilities and maximize the benefits we gain from these processors."

The IT group also plans to take advantage of hardware-assisted virtualization capabilities built into Intel Core vPro processors. "By virtualizing

desktops, we can enable employees to move more freely from one computer to another while retaining the same environment. At the same time, desktop virtualization can help us simplify management tasks since we can maintain PC images back in the data center," says Dextre. "Intel Core vPro processors offer built-in hardware-assisted technologies that can help us make the most of desktop virtualization."

Princess Cruises deploys Lenovo M92p Tiny* desktops and Lenovo ThinkPad* T430s laptops, all with Intel Core i5 vPro processors. The computers run a variety of software applications on Windows 7 and earlier operating systems. The IT group uses Microsoft SCCM for PC management.

The IT group worked with solution provider Allied Digital Services to activate the Intel vPro platform for remote management. "The Allied Digital team was a tremendous help in integrating the Intel vPro platform with Microsoft SCCM," says Rooney. "With the experience and expertise that Allied Digital offers, we were able to get things right the first time."

Reducing Downtime from Days to Minutes

Within the first few months of activating systems, the IT group experienced some of the important benefits of the Intel vPro platform's KVM Remote Control and out-of-band management capabilities. "We had some problems with systems in Italy. In the past, we would have tried to walk users through a diagnostic process and asked them for screen shots to help identify the issue," says Rooney. "With the Intel vPro platform, we can access distant PCs remotely, without requiring help from users. Instead of mail-in repairs or deskside visits that can take days to schedule, now we can solve problems in less than an hour."

Lessons Learned

"Understanding the full capabilities of the technologies you are selecting can be very beneficial for future planning," says Liberty Rooney, PC support analyst for Princess Cruises. "We chose Intel® Core™ vPro™ processors years ago, in part because of their capabilities for remote management and desktop virtualization. Now we can capitalize on those capabilities using the PCs we've already deployed across the enterprise."

"Solving problems quickly, and remotely, will help our land-based employees to stay productive," says Dextre. "And as we activate the Intel vPro platform on PCs located on ships, we can help our shipboard IT staff focus on other tasks."

Decreasing Power Consumption and Boosting Worker Productivity

Remote power management capabilities are helping reduce energy consumption for the company's large call center. "By using the Intel vPro platform, we power systems down at night when they aren't in use," says Dextre. "We have a green, energy-efficient solution that helps us save money."

The IT group also boots up the systems in the morning to ensure that call center agents can begin providing excellent customer service as soon as they arrive at work. "Our call centers are vital to generating revenue for the business," says Rooney. "With the Intel vPro platform, we can make sure our agents are productive right away."

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