

Platform Housing Group Ltd achieves significant cost savings with Parallels RAS



Industry
Not-for-profit

Company Size
Enterprise

Type
End user

Region
United Kingdom

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"Prior to implementing Parallels RAS, our organization utilized Citrix Virtual Apps and Terminal Server (2012). We also looked at Omnissa, but the level of features offered by Parallels and the simplicity, ease of building it, and the fact we could implement the technology on our own encouraged us to proceed with Parallels RAS. We are very pleased to have chosen such a quality solution."

Neil Clarke, Infrastructure Lead
Platform Housing Group

About Platform Housing Ltd

- Located in United Kingdom.
- One of the largest housing associations in the Midlands; approximately 1,200 staff, over 120,000 customers, and 45,000 homes.
- Committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults within the communities they work in.

About Parallels RAS

Parallels® RAS is an all-in-one remote working solution that enables access to virtual

The challenge

Platform Housing Group is one of the largest housing associations in the United Kingdom's Midlands; they own and manage over 48,000 homes across a portfolio that includes social and affordable rent and shared ownership homes.

As a UK housing leader, they work with buyers in many life stages and continuously invest in their communities and technology with the goal of creating wonderful places to live.

A few years ago, Platform Housing Group furthered its growth by merging with another housing group.

While the merger was a success, they initially experienced challenges combining IT infrastructures.

The organization that they were unifying with had a networked computer system with most resources installed locally rather than distributed over a network.

Their infrastructure was combination of Microsoft Remote Desktop Services (RDS) and Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops — and it had certain drawbacks.

While the Platform Housing Group team was satisfied with the capabilities of Citrix, their biggest complaints were the overly complicated maintenance required, as well as its high price tag.

applications and desktops on any device, anytime, anywhere.

Knowing that other solutions were available, the IT team began to explore alternatives.

The solution

While the Platform Housing Group's IT leaders had not heard of Parallels® RAS before, they discovered the product while searching for alternatives. It offered the same services as their Citrix solution, but at a better price point.

This fact, combined with the good reviews and many respected organizations already using Parallels, was enough to convince the IT team it was worth trying.

After exploring the demo version, the team knew they had found a winner.

Beyond the affordability, Parallels RAS is a comprehensive solution that comes loaded with features.

When the IT team wanted more flexibility, they appreciated having the functions that Citrix lacked, such as the HTML5 gateway that allows users to launch and work with published applications inside an HTML5-enabled web browser.

Additional features such as High Availability Load Balancing, granular filtering and multi-factor authentication have further increased their IT systems' security and redundancy.

Both the finance team and the housing management team of Platform Housing Group appreciated that Parallels RAS could publish their essential applications.

Currently, Parallels RAS helps them to publish SDS Proval, IPOS, Capita Open housing, Swordfish. DRS, Microsoft Office, and local files shared on the network.

The result

Parallels RAS has allowed Platform Housing users to be more flexible in the way they work. With the previous solution, users had to first access terminal servers, then an additional Citrix screen.

With Parallels RAS, they can access apps from a central location instead of opening many different screens, thus simplifying the user experience and eliminating a major cause of confusion for their end users.

Parallels RAS offers an excellent user experience—users don't realize they are accessing their applications through the server. With Parallels RAS, Platform Housing Group now has monitoring and reporting capabilities that monitor the performance and resource usage of components on the system.

Platform Housing Group also centralized their users' different management consoles into one system that can be pushed to their users using Parallels RAS. Single Sign-On (SSO) works as designed, and users can securely log in once and access different services without re-entering authentication factors.

Their bottom line was also positively affected by Parallels RAS. The team knows they have saved money across the board with Parallels RAS. In addition to the affordable licensing plans, they reduced overhead costs and resources spent on backend support and management support.

Platform Housing Group has also reduced troubleshooting time for users and managing servers. With their prior solution, they had more than 50 servers; now they have reduced that number to 20.

As a non-profit, the savings achieved by implementing Parallels RAS affect more than just their bottom line. Resources saved by switching from Citrix to Parallels allow them to invest in more properties and provide more people with places to live.