



“From improved process integration to centralised maintenance of Paragon and reduced hardware; we’re shaving costs, increasing efficiency and reducing our carbon footprint right across the business. Already we’re assessing other areas of the business that will benefit from migrating onto a virtual desktop infrastructure.”

Mark Ridgewell, Head of Information Systems, Keystone Distribution UK

Virtualisation Transforms Supply Chain

Keystone Distribution

Keystone Distribution UK exclusively manages the supply chain and delivery of fresh, frozen and ambient food, promotional items, point of sale material and cleaning products to McDonald’s 1200 restaurants in the UK. Making over 500 deliveries per day, the entire operation, including warehouse management, traffic monitoring and delivery updates, is coordinated using Paragon Software Systems.

Securing the continuity of this business-critical application is the responsibility of Mark Ridgewell, Head of Information Systems at Keystone Distribution UK;

“Paragon is an integral part of our business, but the system was previously only accessible from designated desktop PCs. To safeguard the continuity of our business we needed to extend authorised users to the system and ensure it could be securely accessed from any device, at any time and any location, including home workers.”

Working with long-term ICT partners Pasporte and IBM, Keystone sought a solution that would enable them to extend the availability of the Paragon software, but without increasing either the operational or financial burden on Ridgewell’s IT team.

“Our core networking requirements are managed by Pasporte and IBM. It’s a collaborative relationship that brings both stability and innovation to the design and execution of our IT strategy, as well as hands-on consultancy and support,” says Ridgewell.

He adds; “Bringing both partners on-board to help resolve the issues we faced was a natural progression of the relationship. We trusted Pasporte and IBM to find a solution, and to do so in a cost-effective manner.”

From the outset, a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) strategy was identified as providing a flexible, low-cost and low-carbon solution to the challenges faced by Keystone. VDI would deliver the desktop computing functionality required, but without the management complexity or cost of a PC-based architecture. Furthermore, Pasporte could offer this as a hosted solution from its secure data centres.

Pasporte and IBM designed and developed a Hosted Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (HVDI) service, bespoke to Keystone’s requirements, which was then implemented over a two-week period. The interface provides a true PC-like experience helping to reduce the need for user training, and thereby allowing Keystone to very quickly extend access to its Paragon Software System.

With the application delivered ‘as-a-service’, the operational cost of managing the application is further slashed since Pasporte and IBM provide 24/7 monitoring and maintenance. The service is further supported by Pasporte’s ISO 27001 compliant operations. As a result, Keystone is benefitting from improved application performance, greater resilience, and an enhanced company disaster recovery programme.

In the longer term, the flexibility of Pasporte’s HVDI means Keystone can rapidly scale the service, migrating other applications and users onto the virtual platform at a pace to suit the business

Ridgewell concludes; “HVDI is transforming how Keystone operates. We have tripled our authorised Paragon users, and the system is now accessible from any permitted client. Whilst this helps to mitigate risk to the business, we’re also realising other significant benefits as a result.



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