

Atos Healthcare Data Stays Secure and Cost-Effective with a Healthy Dose of Reflection and Citrix

Seamless operation with Citrix solutions and Attachmate's world-class support make Reflection the choice for major healthcare provider



Based in the UK, Atos Healthcare, a division of Atos Origin, combines the company's expertise in consulting, technology, and healthcare services to improve the way care is delivered. Each year, Atos Healthcare carries out one million medical assessments, and as the number one occupational health provider,* looks after the occupational health of 680,000 employees from its 150 UK treatment centres.

Atos Healthcare has a wealth of experience and knowledge in delivering ground-breaking projects, including Choose and Book, and one of the first independently run, award-winning NHS (National Health Service) Walk-In Centres in the UK. Atos Healthcare is also working on the development of the Personal Medical Record in France. (www.atoshealthcare.com)

IT management challenged with security and budget constraints

Atos Healthcare must respond to changes in government mandates, and ensure that patient information is securely managed. Nick Bhogal, IT Project Manager for Atos Healthcare, manages various infrastructure projects and handles technical governance in the medical business unit.

As part of a cost reduction program, Atos Healthcare was asked to decrease the number of software suppliers and leverage existing solutions. Strict government contractor guidelines require Atos Healthcare to keep the UNIX-based Ingres open source database system intact for the contract duration—which means changes can only be made to the front-end, but not the back-end.

The company used terminal emulation to access green screen applications, but the emulator could not successfully integrate with Citrix® solutions. The applications developed came from a legacy ICL DRS system, and the keyboards had to be translated to Windows, which also proved difficult. "We had problems with deployment on thin client architecture," Bhogal explained. "We were never able to integrate it due to time scales and complexity."

"As special customization was required with keyboard translation, I knew from my earlier experience using Attachmate® Reflection® terminal emulation, that the solution worked across multiple environments and platforms and would be the right choice for us," continued Bhogal.

QUICK VIEW

Problem

Customer needed to deploy legacy host applications via Citrix solutions, in order to save time, cut costs, and reduce effort

Solution

Attachmate Reflection for UNIX and OpenVMS

Results

- Ease of integration
- Ability to seamlessly deploy applications in a Citrix environment
- Improved performance and productivity
- Compliance with regulatory security mandates
- Superior product and technical support

Reliable Citrix-based terminal emulation

Reflection for UNIX and OpenVMS supports multiple operating environments, including Microsoft® Windows Vista®, Windows Server Terminal Services, Citrix XenApp/Presentation Server, Microsoft SoftGrid App-V, and VMware. Reflection helps facilitate security compliance, and easily integrates legacy host data with Microsoft Office applications.

For more than a decade, Attachmate has been a Citrix Technology Alliance Partner, and during that time, hundreds of Attachmate customers have used Reflection products in Citrix environments. Reflection has evolved into the most reliable Citrix-based terminal emulation application on the market. In fact, Reflection is the only terminal emulation solution to achieve the Citrix Ready logo.

Citrix deployment a key factor

Atos Healthcare benefits from the ability to deploy the green screen application via Citrix MetaFrame™ XP, reducing operating costs. Previously, doctors would complete a medical examination and manually write the report, have the information faxed to the head office, and clear down files off of the system. Now, the process is done on a daily basis from the remote site.

"I recommend going with a supplier that knows what they are doing. From ease of integration to product support, Attachmate is tested—they are 'doctors of technology'. Keep up the good work."

– Nick Bhogal, IT Project Manager, Atos Healthcare

Other applications deployed via Citrix solutions include Microsoft Office, email communications, and several home-grown Visual Basic applications, such as the medical skills register. Team leaders and managers at Atos Healthcare use Reflection to manage processes such as billing and scheduling.

Because Atos Healthcare is moving to a web-centric architecture, the business model was designed with new applications replacing applications accessed by the telnet client. Disparate systems are talking to each other, yet the green screen applications are not being phased out. "We have reduced costs by deploying this combination of a web-based application accessing the green screen application," Bhogal confirmed.

Atos Healthcare provides access to Citrix solutions via Windows ICA clients, totaling about 1,700 devices spread over 150+ sites. Bhogal reports that the total cost of ownership is less now. "We have terminals in Inverness, Scotland, and two in the examination room. In terms of servicing, it is very reliable to service the terminals from a PC," he noted.

"We haven't seen any technical issues with Reflection since we have deployed via Citrix solutions. It's quite reassuring to know that Attachmate has done their research and development through their customer user base," said Bhogal.

Security of data is critical

Due to the critical nature of handling personal medical details, Atos Healthcare adheres to regulatory standards from CESG (Communications Electronic Security Group), the U.K.'s information assurance organisation for electronic data security.

Atos Healthcare secures the internal network dialog between the host application and the desktop. No local data is kept on site on PCs. Citrix implementation reduces network traffic overhead, increases performance,

and provides encryption for user sessions. Additionally, some users leverage Reflection's integrated SSH functionality to securely login via a terminal session.

Exceptional post-sales support sets Attachmate apart

Bhogal praised the extensive knowledge base of Attachmate. "They provide excellent, detailed, and accurate reports, and we rely on their expertise for implementation and support. It's not just selling—it's the post-sales support that sets Attachmate apart," Bhogal added.

Today, Bhogal and staff can concentrate on other IT projects, without worrying about the performance or reliability of Reflection. "We are slowly moving into a virtualized environment, so it is nice to know that Attachmate is at the forefront of support for that technology as well."

Atos Healthcare is planning an upgrade from Citrix MetaFrame XP to Citrix XenApp and their testing has shown that Reflection works flawlessly in both versions. Demonstrating exceptional customization with keyboard mapping, and integration with Citrix, Attachmate's expertise in this project has proved without peer.

"I recommend going with a supplier that knows what they are doing—it's so much easier," commented Bhogal. "From ease of integration to product support, Attachmate is tested—they are 'doctors of technology'," he added. "Keep up the good work."



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