



CASE STUDY

Citrix Access Information for **BANKING AND FINANCE**

United Overseas Bank (Malaysia) Bhd Saves Up to US\$766,000 Annually on IT Costs

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MR. LUM CHEE ONN

Head of Division – ITD, UOB Malaysia

Key Benefits

- Saved US\$266,000 annually by extending lifespan of existing PCs
- Saved US\$500,000 annually in bandwidth costs
- Streamlined IT management and administration
- Improved application response times and staff productivity
- Reduced number of calls to help desk for password resets

Applications Deployed

- Microsoft® Office 2000
- Treasury system
- Loan origination system
- Human Resource Management system
- Credit rating system
- Web-based collection system (running on AS/400)

Incorporated in Malaysia in 1993, United Overseas Bank (Malaysia) Bhd (UOB Malaysia) is a subsidiary of the United Overseas Bank Group Singapore. Today, UOB Malaysia operates 36 branches strategically located throughout the country and offers a full range of commercial banking and financial services. As part of the United Overseas Bank Group in Singapore, UOB Malaysia is backed by vast resources, including RM235.3 billion in total assets and RM27.7 billion in capital and reserves, as well as advanced technological support and an international network of offices.

THE CHALLENGE: PROVIDING SECURE REMOTE ACCESS FOR BRANCH OFFICES

In its quest to become one of the top three foreign banks in Malaysia, UOB recognized the importance of utilizing technology as a strategic advantage, and has been on a mission to deploy the latest IT applications to improve operating processes and customer service.

However, several technological challenges stood in its path. Firstly, UOB’s distributed IT environment made it difficult for its IT staff to efficiently maintain the systems and roll out new applications and upgrades. With more than 2,000 desktops spread out across 36 branches in East and West Malaysia, installing a new application proved to be a tremendously time-consuming exercise.

Secondly, the heterogeneous IT architecture meant not only that the various branches had disparate systems, but those with older PC configurations were unable to support some of the new applications. Thirdly, UOB employees at the branch offices were experiencing performance issues with some computing-intensive applications. Limited by the high cost of bandwidth, UOB branches are connected via data lines ranging between 128Kb and 348Kb. This limited bandwidth resulted in branch office staff sometimes having to wait 70 seconds to open a 650-Kb file attachment, translating into decreased employee productivity and slower response to customers.

Another problem was the amount of time IT staff spent resetting up to 300 passwords each month. Password resets amounted to more than 35 percent of the calls received at the IT help desk, a direct result of employees struggling to remember multiple passwords at any one time.

CITRIX ACCESS PLATFORM FOR BRANCH CONNECTIVITY AND ENTERPRISE SINGLE SIGN-ON

“After evaluating alternative solutions, UOB Malaysia eventually decided on Citrix access infrastructure solutions because of the company’s proven track record and market leadership, and the superior features and functionality of its products,” said Mr. Lum Chee Onn, Head of Division – ITD, UOB Malaysia. “Among all the options we were evaluating, Citrix solutions worked best for our needs.”

Mr. Lum added that the Citrix consultants engaged in the initial stage proved to be an invaluable resource, conducting the full scale of services from infrastructure assessment through assisting in the implementation of the pilot phase.

“Not only did they provide the necessary strategic advice, they were willing to roll up their sleeves and provide hands-on support whenever needed. They were very responsive throughout and even after the project, always quick to answer ad-hoc technical queries,” he said.

UOB Malaysia eventually implemented a world-class computing service comprising Citrix Presentation Server™ and Citrix Password Manager™ with Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003 running on 20 servers to support an initial rollout to 500 concurrent users, primarily for the sales and back-office support departments throughout the 36 UOB branches in East and West Malaysia, with the aim of extending it to more than 2,000 users by mid-2006.

The Citrix solution is currently helping to deliver six mission-critical applications comprising business, human resources and proprietary solutions, including Microsoft® Office 2000, Microsoft® Exchange 2000, the bank’s treasury, credit rating and human resource systems, and a loan origination system.

ANNUAL TOTAL SAVINGS OF UP TO US\$766,000 IN PC UPGRADES AND BANDWIDTH COSTS

UOB Malaysia has derived multiple benefits from implementing Citrix Access Suite™ solutions, including substantial cost savings.

“Citrix solutions enable us to centralize all our applications onto a single platform, thus allowing us to better support a wide variety of systems across the branches, regardless of the hardware existing at the branch level,” said Mr. Lum. He added that the centralized IT architecture also enables the IT staff to complete the rollout of new applications more quickly — saving significant time and money.

“Because Citrix enables new applications to be accessed via basic computing hardware such as Pentium 1 systems, UOB has eliminated the need to upgrade about 300 to 400 PCs annually, saving approximately US\$266,000 each year,” he continued.

The ability of Citrix technology to publish legacy and proprietary applications over the Web without rewriting code also saved significant time and money. UOB created a corporate Web portal that serves as the single point through which all of UOB Malaysia’s employees access applications and get updates on the latest products and services.

Mr. Lum added that UOB Malaysia has drastically reduced application response delays, and improved staff productivity in the process. The time needed to open a 650-Kb attachment was slashed from 70 seconds to less than five seconds after implementing the Citrix solution. Similarly, computing-intensive applications such as the credit rating reports, which used to take 60 seconds for the first page to load using a Pentium 2 PC, now take a mere 10 seconds.

Networking Environment

- Citrix Presentation Server™ running on 20 Dell PowerEdge 1855 servers
- Citrix Password Manager™
- Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003
- 128Kb to 384Kb LAN connections
- 500 PCs from Pentium 1 to Pentium 3

“We’re easily saving up to US\$500,000 a year on bandwidth costs because Citrix technology enables UOB to deliver computing-intensive applications over low-bandwidth connections,” he said.

The enterprise single sign-on (SSO) solution provided by Citrix Password Manager allows users to authenticate once with a single password. Password Manager automates logons, policy enforcement and password changes, making connecting to applications easier, faster and more secure. Password Manager has helped to improve password security at UOB Malaysia and reduced the number of calls to the help desk for password resets.

FUTURE PLANS

“The decision to implement Citrix solutions has paid off. In fact, based on our experience, I think other banks in Asia would greatly benefit from Citrix solutions as well,” concluded Mr. Lum.

Having derived numerous benefits, Mr. Lum said that UOB Malaysia plans to deploy even more applications, such as SAP, in the near future using Citrix Presentation Server. The bank is also looking to use the Citrix Access Platform as the foundation for disaster recovery and business continuity plans, as well as to provide mobile access to staff.

About the Citrix Access Suite: The Citrix Access Suite™ is the most powerful enterprise solution available for providing secure, on-demand access to any enterprise resource — from anywhere, with any device, over any network. The Access Suite bundles Citrix Presentation Server™, Citrix Access Gateway™, and Citrix Password Manager™ into an always-on connection to information. It is secure by design, centralizes access, provides a robust and resilient foundation for business, and automatically adjusts to dynamic access scenarios.