

Terminal Emulation Solution Improves Access, Productivity With Centralized Interface



Overview

Country or Region: Global

Industry: Software

Partner Profile

Attachmate Corporation offers solutions that include host connectivity and systems and security management. Based in Seattle, Washington, the company has more than 65,000 customers in 60 countries.

Business Situation

Accessing data stored on multiple host systems and platforms can result in an inefficient workflow, slow customer service, and costly manual data handling processes.

Solution

Attachmate designed Reflection 2008, a terminal emulation application that takes advantage of Windows Vista technology to provide a secure, centralized interface for accessing critical information.

Benefits

Centralized, easier access to electronic data will help companies cut costs
Integration with standard Windows platform will increase productivity
Improved management tools will make IT administration easier, more secure

Product Solution Items

Windows Vista™
2007 Microsoft® Office System
Windows® Internet Explorer® 7.0

“Attachmate and Microsoft customers benefit from the joint cooperation between these two industry-leading software providers. As a result of this collaboration, our customers will enjoy productivity gains and enhanced security for IT environments, resulting in clear return on investment.”

Randy Robinson, Senior Vice President of Products and Marketing, Attachmate

In today's complex business environment, data is often stored on multiple host systems and on a variety of host platforms. When employees cannot easily find and share information, they may grapple with an inefficient workflow and diminished productivity, which in turn can reduce profits for the employer. Moreover, manual data handling processes, multiple host connections, and the potential for unauthorized access to critical data all pose possible security risks. Businesses can improve productivity and minimize security risks by installing Attachmate® Reflection® 2008, a terminal emulation application. Reflection 2008 takes advantage of Windows Vista™ Enterprise features to provide more secure, centralized access to vital information.

In addition, the application will help improve productivity with a 2007 Microsoft® Office system interface and integration with Windows® Internet Explorer® 7.0. Support for Microsoft Active Directory® services and new Windows Vista features, such as User Account Control and expanded Group Policy settings, will also help to strengthen security.

Situation

Attachmate Corporation offers multihost access and integration solutions to enterprises in a variety of markets including finance, telecommunications, retail, manufacturing, government, travel, and healthcare. Employees in these market segments often have to cope with locating information and applications stored across a variety of host systems, in a number of locations, and possibly even through third parties.

For example, a typical call center employee might have an opportunity to upsell or cross-sell a product during a service request call from a customer. The employee may need to access the customer's billing information from one screen or application, the customer's current product set from a Web application, potential offers from a third screen, and a service call request from a separate database. The employee must struggle with opening multiple connections and manipulating several different application screens while the customer waits on the phone. The company would benefit by reducing the time spent handling data, because shorter phone calls translate to happier customers, more product sales, and improved employee productivity.

Attachmate offers a solution with its terminal emulation products, which provide a centralized, reliable "window" into host applications stored on a variety of legacy host systems. While customers leveraging an Attachmate product already benefit from easier access to vital information, Attachmate wanted to offer its customers better functionality: new search features, enhanced security, and improved methods for organizing and handling data.

Solution

Attachmate worked closely with Microsoft to develop Reflection 2008, terminal emulation software that takes advantage of Windows Vista Enterprise features and offers a 2007 Microsoft Office system look and feel. Powerful new search capabilities, integration with the Microsoft Office system, and an easy-to-use, intuitive interface will help users to be more productive.

New search features are central to Reflection 2008. Attachmate's customers will be able to take advantage of Windows Vista search

capabilities to quickly locate data on host application screens, other desktop and Web applications, and online help from a single interface. Attachmate also added a search access point in the upper-right corner of the terminal session screen so that it's easy to perform searches from within the open application. Mike Rogers, Attachmate development manager, is excited about this new function. He says, "We took advantage of the new Windows Vista feature, integrated desktop search, to do a number of things that enable customers to use search features in the terminal emulation context. This is a whole new area for us."

Reflection 2008 will also increase efficiency by allowing users to save and search session history data without needing to reconnect to the host application. Damon Dreke, Attachmate product marketing manager, explains, "In addition to what one might think of as desktop search, customers will also be able to search stored screen history within our application. So users will be able to browse or run applications, display data, and store the different screen shots of each session to represent later as screen history. Moreover, the search function can actually search the data as displayed on those stored host screens while using privacy filters to protect sensitive information." Further, Attachmate's customers will be able to add and edit file properties, making all files easy to find regardless of location or network configuration changes.

Along with new search features, the intuitive, easy-to-use interface will increase productivity by helping users to find and connect to data resources quicker. For example, Attachmate implements Windows Vista Live Icons by embedding a sign-on screen of the host application as a graphic on the terminal emulation screen. In addition, integration with Windows Internet Explorer 7.0 will improve efficiency by allowing users to organize and access both host and Web-based applications in a single interface.

These processes will help customers save time, and they will even be able to customize the application for easier data handling. For instance, Microsoft Visual Basic for Applications scripts can be written to replicate data between a host application and one that is Web-based. Rogers explains, "Most companies have built Web applications

over the past several years but are still using host applications as well for mission-critical business. Many employees, particularly those in large call centers, have to switch between both." For example, information for a service call might be entered in the host application, while data for a sale might be entered in the Web application. Rogers continues, "It would be a shame to have to type in the information twice, so we support writing macros to shuttle data between applications."

The Reflection 2008 interface has a 2007 Microsoft Office system ribbon look and feel and offers familiar productivity tools such as spell check, auto complete, and auto expand. These tools help users work more efficiently. For example, a user can associate an entire paragraph of commonly used text to simple keystroke shortcuts, saving valuable time and making the organization more efficient. Integration with the 2007 Microsoft Office system (including Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007) will help users quickly adapt the application into a standard office environment and will save Attachmate customers time and training costs in the process.

The terminal emulation application offers productivity gains to IT administrators as well as end users. Integration with standard management tools such as Microsoft Active Directory services and Group Policy make managing access to resources easier and more secure. Reflection 2008 allows administrators to "lock down" the product using Group Policy. Administrators can then choose which features are available to users and which features require administrative credentials by using the Windows Vista User Account Control (UAC) feature. Attachmate also takes advantage of UAC to help deploy the solution more securely and quickly. UAC will allow IT professionals to troubleshoot or make adjustments to desktop settings without needing their users to log off. This new feature can help Attachmate's customers deploy Reflection 2008 more quickly and efficiently while minimizing business risk by protecting valuable system resources.

Benefits

Attachmate has adapted emerging Microsoft technology to design a terminal emulation product with new, groundbreaking features. For the first time, the company's customers

will be able to use desktop search tools within an open terminal emulation application. Customers will be able to find and organize information within one easy-to-use interface, and integration with the 2007 Microsoft Office system tools will help make sharing information easy. In addition, new security features will give IT administrators greater control and help keep customers' data more secure.

Centralized, Easier Access to Electronic Data Will Help Companies Cut Costs

Easier access to data will help improve data handling, save time, and reduce errors. Powerful new search features will help users find and organize information more quickly, which will translate into improved productivity. "Attachmate and Microsoft customers benefit from the joint cooperation between these two industry-leading software providers," says Randy Robinson, senior vice president of products and marketing. "As a result of this collaboration, our customers will enjoy productivity gains and more secure IT environments, resulting in clear return on investment."

Integration with Standard Windows Platform Will Increase Productivity

Reflection 2008 is designed to integrate smoothly into the familiar 2007 Microsoft Office system environment. "Most of our customers have some version of Office, and we interoperate seamlessly with the different Office applications," says Dreke. For example, a user could create Microsoft Office PowerPoint® slides using a series of session screenshots to create a user guide, or the same screenshots could be sent in an e-mail through Office Outlook 2007 or embedded in an Office Word 2007 document within the Reflection 2008 application. Dreke adds, "The overall benefit is that we have created a connected application that doesn't just sit on its own. Instead, it helps customers use and share information more quickly."

Improved Management Tools Will Make IT Administration Easier, More Secure

Attachmate's existing security features combined with newly supported Windows Vista capabilities will offer customers optimum security benefits. Sophisticated data encryption, user authentication, and privacy filters complemented by Windows Vista features such as UAC and enhanced Group Policy settings will help ensure the

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about Attachmate products and services, call (800) 872-2829, or visit the Web site at: www.attachmate.com.

security of systems as well as more controlled deployment. Rogers says, "We strive to keep up with emerging and evolving Microsoft technologies, and we are dedicated to the terminal emulation market. Attachmate products not only improve the productivity of the end user, they also enhance the productivity and control of IT administrators."

Microsoft Windows Vista

Windows Vista can help your organization use information technology to gain a competitive advantage in today's new world of work. Your people will be able to find and use information more effectively. You will be able to support your mobile work force with better access to shared data and collaboration tools. And your IT staff will have better tools and technologies to enhance corporate IT security, data protection, and more efficient deployment and management.

For more information about Windows Vista, go to www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/