



## Windows 7 Customer Solution Case Study



### IT Firm Upgrades Operating System to Reduce Costs, Enhance Security and Productivity

#### Overview

**Country or Region:** The Netherlands

**Industry:** Professional services—IT services

#### Customer Profile

Getronics, located in Zoetermeer, the Netherlands, provides information and communications technology solutions. It has 16,000 employees in 18 countries, and had 2008 revenues of €1.9 billion (U.S.\$2.5 billion).

#### Business Situation

Getronics wanted to enable personal productivity, simplify the management and enhance the security of its 16,000 client computers. It also wanted to improve user efficiency and reduce support costs.

#### Solution

Getronics intends to deploy the Windows® 7 operating system to 16,000 desktop and notebook computers, and use the Microsoft® Desktop Optimization Pack to further simplify management.

#### Benefits

- Reduced support costs
- Desktop deployment savings of 2,500 hours annually
- Enhanced security and management
- Expected productivity gains
- New business opportunities

“We have been very impressed with the productivity and management savings that we have realized with Windows 7. Our customers will enjoy the same savings.”

*Coen Olde Olthof, Vice President of Marketing and Alliances, Portfolio and Strategy, Getronics*

Getronics is a leading global provider of information and communication technology solutions and a long-time Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner. While this Netherlands-based global workspace management company wanted to be prepared to help customers adopt the Windows® 7 operating system, it also aimed to take advantage of new features in that software to help it manage and secure its own 16,000 computers. With its rollout of Windows 7, Getronics expects to reduce overall desktop support costs and save 2,500 hours annually on operating system deployment. New Windows 7 security and manageability features will help Getronics strengthen desktop security and reduce downtime, and productivity improvements will significantly enhance user productivity when Windows 7 is deployed companywide. Getronics also expects to realize new revenues from helping its customers deploy the software.



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Lee Nicholls, Director of Global Solutions,  
Getronics

## Situation

Getronics is a leading provider of information and communications technology solutions and is based in Zoetermeer, the Netherlands. It has 16,000 employees in 18 countries, and had annual revenues of €1.9 billion (U.S.\$2.5 billion) in 2008. As an expert in workspace management services, data center and hosting services, and IT consulting, Getronics helps large organizations, especially those in financial services, retail, manufacturing, and government; use their information systems to work more productively, securely, and competitively to achieve business results.

As a longtime Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner, Getronics deploys new Microsoft software internally to be prepared to help customers deploy it. “We are first and best in class with Microsoft solutions precisely because we deploy them internally. We are our own best practice,” says Lee Nicholls, Director of Global Solutions at Getronics.

When Microsoft announced the Windows® 7 operating system, Getronics was among the first organizations to test the beta version of the software. Getronics wanted to be prepared to advise clients on the operating system’s benefits, reap efficiencies in its own operations, and realize customer benefits as part of its workspace management solution called Future-Ready Workspace™. In fact, Nicholls’s job is to interpret how Getronics can use the latest Microsoft programs internally, which helps Getronics gain a first-hand understanding of how customers can use them, too. “As a large organization with 16,000 desktop and notebook computers to manage all over the world, we are very interested in any efficiencies that we can bring to that area, both from the perspective of managing and using desktop computers more effectively,” Nicholls says.

As part of its deployment of the Windows Vista® operating system companywide,

Getronics developed industry-leading tools for speeding desktop software deployment—but there was always room for improvement. The company’s IT staff refreshes one third of its desktop hardware each year, which means that it deploys approximately 5,000 client computers annually. Getronics developed a desktop migration service based on the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit called Rapid Deployment eXperience (RDX), which largely automates the deployment of a desktop computer to the latest Windows operating system while preserving the data and personality of the machine. With RDX, organizations require fewer deployment technicians and project managers, and can reduce the overall cost of desktop deployment.

Using RDX internally, Getronics had cut the manual labor portion of operating-system deployment time down to about 10 minutes per machine. Still, with initial deployment and a reinstallation every two years, the IT staff spent thousands of hours annually deploying operating systems. “Operating system deployment is still a challenge for most of our customers,” explains Harald den Houter, Principal Technical Consultant at Getronics. “We have to assign roles and functionality to each location while using a single operating system image. It’s complex and tedious work. Our deployment experience (RDX) helps them with that.”

In addition to streamlining desktop deployment, Getronics was interested in seeing how Windows 7 could simplify computer use for its employees, who are always strapped for time and impatient with uncooperative computers. Users complained about the difficulty of connecting to the corporate network from home, navigating through intrusive security precautions, and locating electronic information. “Locating information is difficult for nearly everyone in the company, because information is spread

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Harald den Houter, Principal Technical Consultant, Getronics

across individual computers and dozens of Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server sites,” Nicholls explains. “This has led to reluctance to place information on SharePoint sites, because people are not sure that it can be found.”

The User Account Control feature in Windows Vista was effective in managing user rights and elevations, but the feature was “quite chatty,” den Houter says, which concerned users. “As an IT company, we have a large number of users with local administrative rights,” he says. “User Account Control requires multiple consent-prompts to run even authorized applications, and users didn’t like responding to these prompts.” Users would often turn off User Account Control, but that removed the security safeguards.

### Solution

Getronics learned from Microsoft that Windows 7 would address many of these problems and provide new features to boost user productivity and strengthen computer security. In late 2008, Getronics signed up for the Windows 7 Technology Adoption Program and deployed the Windows 7 Beta more than 350 production desktop computers in the IT and consulting departments. Getronics plans to eventually roll out Windows 7 to all 16,000 computers, as hardware is refreshed. Because Getronics already performed application compatibility testing when it deployed Windows Vista, only minimal testing was required when it moved to Windows 7.

The IT staff was impressed with the performance and stability of the beta code. “We were quite amazed at the stability of the beta code, and also found that most hardware that runs Windows Vista runs Windows 7 faster,” den Houter says.

### New Features Enhance Migration and Security

Getronics is taking advantage of several Windows 7 features to decrease desktop deployment time. “We really like the hardlink migration feature in the User State Migration Tool, which allows us to more efficiently leave data on a computer while the operating system is being wiped and replaced with Windows 7,” says Kevin Reeuwijk, Principal Technical Consultant at Getronics. “Using our RDX tool with Windows XP and Windows Vista, we had to make an extra copy of that data and move it to a temporary location, then copy it back again. This step added 15 minutes of migration time for each gigabyte of data, with an average of 2 gigabytes per machine. With the hardlink migration feature, we can keep the data on the machine without having to create a temporary copy, which significantly reduces migration time.”

Just as important as the migration timesaving is the fact that Windows 7 captures user application settings and data from a computer. “The Windows 7 migration features are a huge improvement over Windows Vista,” Reeuwijk says. “Users do not lose 40 minutes figuring out where things are when they log on to the new operating system for the first time. Everything is familiar so they can get to work right away.”

Getronics uses the BitLocker To Go™ feature in Windows 7 Enterprise to extend the data protection of Windows Vista BitLocker™ Drive Encryption to USB storage devices and safeguard data on mobile storage devices. It is simpler to enable the BitLocker feature in Windows 7. Getronics will also use the AppLocker™ feature to give IT administrators an easier way to specify which applications are allowed to run on the PCs in their organization.

“With Windows 7, we hope to reduce the cost of supporting remote users by over 2,000 hours annually.”

Kris Bries, Infrastructure Manager, Getronics

#### **User-Focused Features Are Popular**

Getronics employees who are using Windows 7 have found the new operating system helpful in boosting productivity. Using the Search Federation feature, employees can search for information on their own computers and on company SharePoint sites, directly from within Windows Explorer. They use the new Windows SuperBar to organize open applications the way they want to see them presented, and Jump Lists to quickly reach recently used files. With the HomeGroup feature, employees can very easily access their home printer or media files from their work PC while still protecting the corporate data from unauthorized access.

Getronics is also realizing the combined value of Windows 7 and Windows Server® 2008 R2 for two specific features. Employees have discovered that the DirectAccess feature will help them more simply yet securely connect to the corporate network when out of the office, without having to manually initiate a virtual private network (VPN) connection. This also reduces time and frustration. With the BranchCache™ feature, Getronics employees in branch offices with slow network connections can speed up access to frequently used files and Web pages by caching that information locally the first time it is accessed, enabling other users in the office to access the local copy faster.

#### **Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack Complements Windows 7**

To increase desktop manageability, reduce costs, and deploy applications more flexibly, Getronics plans to take advantage of several technologies included in the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP) for Software Assurance. This pack complements Windows 7 by providing software for virtualizing applications, centralizing desktop inventories, managing administrative rights, diagnosing desktop problems, and monitoring errors.

Getronics will use MDOP desktop virtualization software, called Microsoft Enterprise Desktop Virtualization (MED-V), to enable employees to use their personal computers for work. Using MED-V, the IT staff can create managed virtual machines within one client computer.

Using the Microsoft Asset Inventory Service, another Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack technology, Getronics can create and maintain a standard application portfolio for all computers. With this standard, the IT staff can more easily detect and resolve configurations that drift from standard build. Getronics can also use the asset inventory capabilities to poll all 16,000 clients from a central console and determine which ones are able to run Windows 7 or other new software.

#### **Benefits**

By upgrading its 16,000 desktop and notebook computers to Windows 7, Getronics expects to realize lower support and operating system deployment costs. Getronics will use the security improvements in Windows 7 to strengthen network security and block noncompliant applications without compromising the way users work. Faster performance and a richer user experience will boost user productivity.

#### **Reduced Support Costs**

Using DirectAccess, the IT staff will be able to better manage its large fleet of notebook computers. Previously, the IT staff could only manage notebook computers when users were in the office or connected to the network over a Virtual Private Network connection. With DirectAccess, they will be able to manage mobile computers any time those systems have Internet connectivity. This will enable the IT staff to distribute software updates and update network authentication settings on a regular basis to ensure that users stay up to date with

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Kevin Reeuwijk, Principal Technical Consultant, Getronics

company policies. “With Windows 7, we hope to reduce the cost of supporting remote users by over 2,000 hours annually,” says Kris Bries, Infrastructure Manager at Getronics.

#### **Desktop Deployment Savings of 2,500 Hours Annually**

Getronics has found that Windows 7 deployment is up to 30 percent faster than that of previous versions of Windows operating systems. “With faster migration of user data and settings, we expect to save 30 minutes per desktop in deployment time,” Bries says. “This adds up to 2,500 hours based on deploying 5,000 workspaces annually.”

#### **Enhanced Security and Management**

Getronics has also tightened desktop and network security with Windows 7. The improved User Account Control feature is more flexible and does not require consent prompts to implement routine actions. This reduces the likelihood that users will disable the security precaution, which enhances security for all Getronics users. It may also reduce calls to the help desk.

“We are using the BitLocker To Go feature to protect corporate data when it leaves the network on a USB data stick, which is an increasingly popular means of transferring data,” den Houter says. “We have better control over our desktop configurations using Group Policy and BitLocker, which enables us to make faster, better decisions about security changes.”

Using the AppLocker audit-only mode, Getronics administrators have created a corporate desktop baseline profile and compare that to the software being run on user desktops. “We have a much better view of software being used that is not supposed to be on the network,” Reeuwijk says. “This enables us to immediately take action to get rid of it, which keeps our network safer.”

#### **Expected Productivity Gains**

Getronics has seen user productivity gains from Windows 7 that could be significant when multiplied by 16,000 employees. “We are already seeing big productivity gains from the new Windows 7 user interface and improved performance,” says den Houter.

The broader, easier data search capability of Windows 7 is part of these time savings.

“Much of our content is locked up in SharePoint sites all over the company,” Reeuwijk says. “Instead of visiting individual SharePoint sites to search for information, users can use Windows 7 Search Federation to perform searches across the company’s information resources directly from Windows Explorer. It’s a big motivator to use our SharePoint sites.”

#### **New Business Opportunities**

Although many of these savings will not be realized until Windows 7 is rolled out companywide, Getronics already has compelling evidence of the efficiency gains that can be realized from upgrading just one element of its technology infrastructure. “We have been very impressed with the productivity and management savings that we have realized with Windows 7. Our customers will enjoy the same savings when they begin deploying it,” says Coen Olde Olthof, Vice President of Marketing and Alliances, Portfolio and Strategy, for Getronics. “It’s very powerful when we can help customers achieve significant savings with a single software program, and demonstrate those savings ourselves.”

Selling the new operating system will also bring in additional revenue by enabling Getronics to offer new and improved solutions in the areas of security, enterprise search, deployment, branch office, and operations.

## For More Information

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For more information about Getronics products and services, call (31) 88 661 0079 or visit the Web site at: [www.getronics.com](http://www.getronics.com)

## Windows 7

Faster and more reliable: Windows 7 will help your organization use information technology to gain a competitive advantage in today's new world of work. Your people will be able to be more productive anyway. 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 7, go to: [www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7)

### Software and Services

- Windows 7 Beta
- Microsoft Office
  - Microsoft Office SharePoint Server
- Technologies
  - Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack for Software Assurance
  - Microsoft Enterprise Desktop Virtualization
  - Microsoft Asset Inventory Service

### Hardware

- Dell OptiPlex desktop computers
- Dell Latitude notebook computers