

PC-CLIENT UPGRADE FOR NOVO NORDISK

Quality crucial PC-client upgrade for Novo Nordisk

With over 30,000 employees in 76 countries, Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk relies on IT systems to keep its business functioning effectively. In 2006, the company upgraded its Windows PC-client operating system from Windows 2000 to Windows XP, but with Microsoft's scheduled support ending, including security updates and security-related hotfixes terminating on 8 April 2014, they needed to prepare for the next major PC-client platform upgrade.

In the pharmaceutical industry, quality control is crucial, so all new systems and applications must be tested thoroughly – and this can take up to a year. Extensive experience in the pharmaceutical industry and a long history with Novo Nordisk made NNIT the obvious choice to build and implement the upgrade as part of its Core Infrastructure Agreement with Novo Nordisk.

THE CHALLENGE:

Ensuring application availability and compatibility

With the anticipated phase-out of hardware support for Windows XP from many vendors by 2012, and Microsoft's extended support expiring by 2014, Novo Nordisk's current operating system has reached the end of its useful life.

However, unlike the previous two Windows upgrades in 2000 and 2006, this project is a lot more complex. Senior Project Manager at NNIT, Mourad Derriche explains, "The previous two upgrades were quite straightforward as Windows XP and Windows 2000 are fairly similar and didn't greatly impact application compat-

ibility. But with this upgrade, we have to remove XP and reinstall everything, so ensuring application availability and compatibility is crucial. It's a huge undertaking to identify all the critical applications for readiness and tailor PC-client deployment so that the same applications are available to all users by September 2011."

What's more, Novo Nordisk's previous PC-client upgrade in 2006 did not include a web browser upgrade, so they are still using Internet Explorer 6. However, many of their business critical IT applications are developed to only support Internet Explorer 6 and are incompatible with the newer Internet Explorer 8. Before the applications can be used on the new PC-client platform, they have to be upgraded, and because of their business criticality, users still need access to them after the upgrade.

THE SOLUTION:

Better performance, higher productivity

With 15 years of experience supporting Novo Nordisk's core IT processes, NNIT has a deep insight into how the organisation works and their quality requirements. An iterative process, the project involves rolling out a fully-tested Windows 7 PC-based image-ready solution, including Office 2010 and Internet Explorer 8, plus a number of upgraded critical support applications and infrastructure components.

The upgrade will ensure continued support from vendors, add new functionality and improve both performance and productivity. And because it supports the latest standards, internal as well as external collaboration with partners and customers will be much easier. The project kicked off in January 2010.

But it soon became apparent that upgrading the business critical applications had escalated from an anticipated obstacle into a major challenge. According to Senior Infrastructure Specialist at Novo Nordisk, Charles Widdis, "We knew that some of our internal applications would have compatibility problems, but there have been a



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**CHARLES WIDDIS,
SENIOR INFRASTRUCTURE SPECIALIST, NOVO NORDISK**

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lot more than we originally anticipated. But NNIT was quick to respond and is helping us mitigate these problems with some advanced platform offerings.”

To overcome the browser/application compatibility issues, NNIT established a Citrix-based virtual environment which runs applications as if they ran on Windows XP, or directly as a virtual computer. Mourad explains, “All the applications that are difficult to upgrade are now able to run on the virtual environment so that Novo Nordisk employees can still access and use them. Over time, each application will either be upgraded or phased out.”

THE RESULT:*Extensive testing ensures quality*

Representatives from each Novo Nordisk affiliate are working together with the NNIT team and Novo Nordisk headquarters, where the solutions are developed, thoroughly tested and deployed locally. And if there are any problems, NNIT provides technical support.

Despite the application compatibility issues, the project is on schedule with the development phase complete and the proof-of-concept phase about to commence. This will take about three months to complete, and afterwards the test, pre-pilot, pilot and facilitation phases will be rolled out.

As quality is crucial in the pharmaceutical industry, the testing phase has been extensive. “We’ve had to address lots of quality issues because Novo Nordisk prioritises quality above all else. If we can meet their standards, we know we’ve done a good job,” says Mourad.

Due to finish in 2012, this is the largest infrastructure project Novo Nordisk has undertaken in ten years – but the benefits are already clear. Charles explains, “We can now leverage more features and the user interface is more intuitive. And, with two more years still to go, NNIT has been great to work with. Both the project management team and the technical specialists have exceeded our expectations.”

**ABOUT NOVO NORDISK**

Novo Nordisk is a global healthcare company with 87 years of innovation and leadership in diabetes care. The company also has leading positions within haemophilia care, growth hormone therapy and hormone replacement therapy.

Headquartered in Denmark, Novo Nordisk employs more than 30,000 employees in 76 countries, and markets its products in 179 countries.

ABOUT 7UP

- Upgrade of PC-client platform from Microsoft Windows XP to Windows 7
- Develop Citrix-based virtual server environment for existing applications
- Perform backup of all existing data for 30,000 users worldwide
- Upgrade the web browser from Internet Explorer 6 to Internet Explorer 8
- Upgrade of Microsoft Office from 2003 to 2010

For further information

Please contact us at nnitcontact@nnit.com to learn more about the case or our services.

ABOUT NNIT

NNIT is an international IT service provider offering IT consulting and the development, implementation and outsourcing of IT services for regulated industries. We create value for our clients by treating their IT as if it were our own. We use IT to support our clients’ daily operations and help them achieve their business goals. Owned by Novo Nordisk, NNIT employs about 1400 people. In 2009 the turnover exceeded €213 million.