

Fpdsavills

Business



Company: Pumatech Customer: FPDSavills Submitted by: Kaizo Date: Autumn 2001
FPDSavills is the trading name for the principle property services subsidiaries of Savills plc, with a full listing on the London Stock Exchange. Founded in 1855, the business is one of the leading firms of International property consultants and real estate agents in the world. With offices and associates throughout the UK, Europe, Asia Pacific and Africa, Savills plc hold's a powerful global position.

Recent dynamic growth, including their strategic alliance with Trammell Crow Company, one of the USA's top full service real estate advisory companies, also gives its customers access to a network of offices across America and Canada. Members can offer expert and unrivalled advice on commercial, rural, residential and leisure properties. FPDSavills offer support in a vast range of areas, including corporate finance advice, property and venture capital funding and a range of property related financial services. FPDSavills has invested, and continues to invest in technology to advance their business objectives.

The Problem: Information Portability

Since 1998, FPDSavills has been successfully operating a thin client environment, whereby the company runs its network centrally via a terminal server, creating a virtual workstation for multiple users.

This is similar to a main frame with information retained on one central server as opposed to individual hard drives. The company also operates a lot of thin client devices that are without a hard drive and are network bootable. Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's), are mobile devices that employees at

FPDSavills have been actively using at work for the past two years. Currently 150 employees use PDA's, most of whom are field-based staff and it is imperative that they access their e-mail and contacts whilst on the move. It was during the synchronisation process, when downloading data onto their PDA's from PC's, that users were experiencing problems. Between 70 to 80 employees were connecting to a single terminal server at one time, and of those employees, an average of 10 Palm users were trying, simultaneously to synchronise their PDA with the terminal server to download their e-mails.

With a PC user, the Palm cable is connected into the back of the PC and synchronisation is operated within the hard drive. However with a thin client environment, similarly the Palm cable is plugged into the users' machine, but synchronisation occurs on the central server, which is accessed by multiple users. In a thin client environment the user must perform a re-directed service comport, re-directing traffic for the Palm, via the client comport. It was during this process that FPDSavills realised that the default conduits would not maintain a connection to the mobile device for more than a few seconds whilst data was being re-directed, and would not support multiple instances of devices attempting to synchronise. Users presented this issue to the Business Systems department for them to provide an appropriate solution. Infrastructure Manager Nigel Smee said, " Our field-based workers using PDA's were frustrated that they were unable to synchronise their Palm's successfully.

" He continues, " It was necessary that they access relevant information whilst on the road and synchronisation had become unsatisfactory with the

default software operating within our thin client environment. So we began the search for a product to sit on top of, or in place of the default software.”

The Solution: Intellisync Anywhere

FPDSavills were one of the first UK companies to implement Intellisync software. In the initial stages they used a test terminal server and trialled 6 devices loaded with Intellisync. After two weeks the company fully installed the solution onto the main terminal server. The solution has been so successful in the UK over the past two years that they have now made it available to their European offices in Paris and Madrid, and are in the trial stages of evaluating Intellisync Anywhere in their Asia-Pacific offices.

FPDSavills standardisation on Intellisync Anywhere is an initiative that further enables its field based employees to quickly and seamlessly synchronise calendar, e-mail, contacts, and tasks between the terminal server and a PDA. Intellisync Anywhere gives employees the flexibility they need, by providing unique capabilities such as full conflict resolution, field mapping, and filtering to ensure accuracy and reliability. The Intellisync Anywhere license agreement with FPDSavills illustrates the growing importance of a standard synchronisation platform within the enterprise.” Without Pumatech’s software the current installation method and solution would not be possible”, advises Nigel Smee. “ I haven’t had to look at any alternative solutions since installing Intellisync because there is no need to, I am more than happy with the solution we have with Pumatech.”