LIQUIT

Municipality migrates to new front-end infrastructure.
Improved user satisfaction and lower management burden at De Fryske Marren

Employees of the municipality of De Fryske Marren in the Netherlands now work on a completely new, modern, fast ICT environment that is independent of time, place, and device. In addition, more effective management gives the IT department more time for innovation. A flexible workspace concept based on Windows 10 combined with Liquit was the solution.

MUNICIPALITY OF DE FRYSKE MARREN

De Fryske Marren is a municipality in the province of Friesland, the Netherlands. The municipality is a merger between several other municipalities and has approximately 51,678 inhabitants.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

The municipality previously operated on a workstation platform based on Windows 7 with ZENworks Configuration Management (ZCM). ZCM was used for the delivery of applications to the employee and as a configuration management system in which various workstations were physically and virtually included. "Our employees were used to a flexible workstation concept based on server-based computing. They logged onto a workstation running at our data center," says Marco Schaap, policy officer for ICT and coordinator for Automation at De Fryske Marren. "At the end of the working day, the workstation was cleaned up, so it was ready for someone else again on the next day."

EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT SAVES TIME

The IT department came with the request to renew the front-end infrastructure. "We knew the date when Windows 7 would go end of life. We started a conversation with our implementation partner Netflex about a migration project from Windows 7 to Windows 10 where the role of ZCM was also discussed," Marco continues "As an alternative, we were offered Liquit Workspace including Liquit Release & Patch Management. The demos of the product were well

received. What stood out for us was the efficiency in packaging and management; we were able to save a lot of time on this. It is also much easier to control access from outside. We made the decision to switch fairly quickly, also because our contracts for ZCM had an end date that was fast approaching."

MIGRATION WITH THE SUPPORT OF NETFLEX

The IT department worked very closely with the partner in the migration process. "We asked if the project manager who has already rolled out several IT projects with us could help us this time as well. We received advise in terms of the design of the virtual desktop infrastructure and help with the implementation of various solutions in our infrastructure. Not only did we migrate from Windows 7 to Windows 10, but we also implemented Liquit Workspace with Liquit Release & Patch Management. We also switched to a different type of image, based on the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit, and we set up our update mechanism differently with Windows Server Update Services. In addition, we jointly started to get all applications technically and functionally ready for the new platform. We completed the project within nine months, from the first implementation designs to going live. Well in time before the end date of Windows 7 support."

DEVELOPING FURTHER WITH LIQUIT

"The step to engage Netflex for this project was fairly obvious. We were able to put their offer, including

Liquit, into a form that was convenient for us in terms of lead time and appropriate to procurement. Liquit is used as a means of deploying applications and is easy for the user and the IT department to manage. We already had ZENworks high up in comparison to other solutions and in Liquit we recognized the same flexibility but in leaner form in terms of footprint on our system. There are also many more possibilities for further development; we are still working very hard on new features. The impact of the change is not as big, so less time is needed to adapt to the new situation."

SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT ACROSS MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

The solution went live in end of 2019. Since then, some 375 concurrent users with some 700 accounts have accessed all applications and settings in a flexible and modern way. "User satisfaction has gone up and the management burden down. Our people now work from home but normally at one of two large offices. Our field team consists of about 200 people, who work at three locations from where they can access their workstations if needed. At about 27 different locations, employees log into zero clients with Multi-Factor Authentication on their phones and use Liquit."

"Day-to-day things but also updates take much less time. First, we had to hire someone for a few days, put them in a chair, supervise them. Now we have a much simpler process to make updates in the image. We also roll out standard applications with Liquit. Of course, these days we are dealing with 24-hour service - more things are offered digitally, but then the processing at the back end must be available. The

shorter the process for management, the better we can focus as an automation department on things that users come up against and renewals that we need to implement."

CHANGE WITHOUT USER DISRUPTION

Marco and his team believe that the user should notice as little as possible of ICT (changes). "If someone gets Windows 10 instead of Windows 7 and Liquit instead of ZCM in front of them, of course they think 'Hey, that's new!' But this change does not involve a steep learning curve or a different way of working. We as administrators benefit greatly when employees notice little of the change."

Jan van der Veen, communications consultant: "I know that the workspace has changed, because the items on my screen look different. But I can do the same - and more - with them. For example, by right-clicking on an application object I can start it automatically. The progress of installations is also more visual and clearer in Liquit. The shell itself is a lot nicer than in the previous package. The change itself did not disrupt us in any way."

LESS COMPLEXITY, FEWER DEPENDENCIES

Marco concludes, "The way the new front-end infrastructure works for us correlates well with the way we view our infrastructure and its management. Satisfaction among our users is higher, and management of the environment has become easier."

Liquit B.V.
Kastanjelaan 6   +31 88 63 83 500
2982 CM Ridderkerk,   www.liquit.com
the Netherlands   info@liquit.com