



**Migration Manager
for Windows**

DARPA

**Windows Migration Time
Reduced 50% with Migration Manager**

TRAN>KITION

CASE STUDY



Business Overview

Headquartered in Washington DC, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency or DARPA, the inventor of ARPANET that led to the development of the Internet, employs more than 240 researchers using a thousand PCs to investigate and develop new research and technology for use by the Department of Defense (DOD).

To ensure that researchers have the latest tools at their disposal to create the best technology for DOD, DARPA's department policies require constant hardware and software refreshes in addition to a minimum of downtime for their researchers whose discoveries may be key to successful military initiatives.

Business Challenge

DARPA had a thousand desktop PCs to upgrade and migrate, and most were running older versions of Windows with over 200 custom applications located on those systems. The support costs were rising quickly as their small IT department struggled to keep up with their department's policy that stated desktop and laptop hardware had to be replaced every two years and software could only be two revisions behind including service packs.

Additionally, users expected that each time a system was refreshed, every icon, piece of data and application setting was exactly the same as on their old PC. DARPA needed to ensure all of these settings and data could be migrated properly to the new computers, sometimes on different operating systems. Not only that, researcher downtimes had to be kept to an absolute minimum because their work contributes to time-sensitive military missions.

A cost-effective process for upgrading the thousand PCs and 200 custom applications was imperative as there were few IT staff that could help analyze which files to move to preserve user data and configuration information and then actually perform the migrations.

"Up to this point," Geffert says, "I was trying to determine which settings, registry keys and hidden files to move for each application by creating up to 50 screenshots for every machine each

time it needed to be replaced or software upgraded," said Mike Geffert, RS Information Systems Customer Support. "Once I started to examine all the application settings, registry keys and system files for each application, I realized I didn't have the time to become an expert for each one and needed Tranxition's software to help me move all these files accurately."

Geffert also realized that many settings on the new operating systems had to be remapped to completely different locations in order to be preserved.

"I was not only trying to learn each application's way of storing settings on a system, but learning where to place these files on the new PC which was taking all of my available time. I also discovered almost every single PC was configured differently, and I was running out of time trying to keep up with our department's policy of only allowing software to be two revisions behind. At the same time I had to keep the new PC application settings as identical as possible to the old PC settings so our researchers wouldn't have long downtimes in this mission critical department."

Gifford knew his constant migration process needed to be accurate and controlled to avoid accidentally omitting the registry keys or system files that their applications relied on. If these requirements could be satisfied with Migration Manager, embedded knowledge of the settings that needed to be moved, he knew that he would not have to manually configure the thousand PCs he was managing.

Tranxition Solution

"Tranxition helped DARPA right at the process planning stage," said Kelly Mackin, co-founder of Tranxition. "We responded quickly to Geffert's requests and relied on our migration expertise to help not only move the right settings and data to the new systems, but to help automate his migration project."

Because DARPA's researchers log into their systems every day and start programs as a regular task, Geffert believed that the risks to allowing a researcher to initiate the migration process were low. "There was no way I could visit every desk, determine which settings to migrate, and still keep PCs current. This process had to use Migration

“Tranxition is a key element to reaching our department’s refresh cycle goals. We need it to ensure our researchers have very limited downtime in this mission critical environment.”

- MIKE GEFFERT, *Customer Support, RSIS*

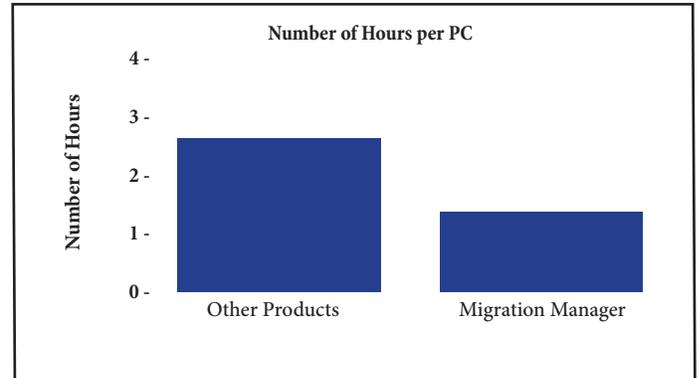
Manager’s built-in application settings expertise and some user involvement to make it work,” said Geffert.

Tranxition’s Mackin agrees. “Again we see an example here where the combination of Migration Manager and a user-initiated process is very time and therefore cost effective. We’re seeing IT departments start to rely more on controlled user initiated system upgrades as utilizing routine skills such as email use. The convenience factor is equally critical as users today can’t be out of commission for hours or days at a time without impacting that department’s overall productivity.”

The Process

DARPA created the following automated process that was initiated by the user at their convenience.

1. The user initiated the upgrade process by request or at the direction of the help desk based on whether their system was due to be upgraded. The user started the migration by clicking a link on the migration server.
2. The user’s data as well as system and application settings were extracted using Migration Manager and its password protection and encryption features. This data was then stored on the migration server.
3. The new PC had the latest OS and service packs installed, was added to the domain, then users and printers were configured.
4. The hard drive was imaged with both standard and custom DARPA applications according to the particular user’s needs.
5. The user’s data and settings were injected to the newly imaged system using Migration Manager.
6. The user was guided through configuration of new applications.
7. The user opened key applications and tested that they worked, then the migration was complete.



Results

The original process of taking 50 snapshots of each of the thousand PCs then manually initiating and managing each migration was extremely time consuming and subject to higher risk of data loss.

When DARPA compared the past effort needed to identify settings to be migrated for each application to the new automated migration process using Migration Manager, they found they were saving over an hour per PC because the time spent to learn each application could be omitted. Geffert is now able plan for and migrate PCs in half the time it used to take.

Geffert says every time they have to refresh systems or upgrade software, they save IT labor costs by implementing the user-initiated, automated migration process and Tranxition’s Migration Manager. And as hoped, all user settings and data are migrated properly. User productivity also isn’t impacted during the migrations because the users select a convenient time for the upgrades so that their research isn’t interrupted and when they sit down to their new computers, their data are exactly where they expected it to be.

About Tranxition

Tranxition delivers excellence in software and services for our corporate customers and partners. We enable IT to complete flawless migrations every time.

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