

Scalable and Green VDI Services

Enabling Accelerated Work-from-Home Demand

French VDI services provider LINKOFFICE relocates its VDI platform to an HPC data center in Paris area to combine scalability, high performance, customer proximity and cost-effective, environmentally friendly hosting.

linkoffice

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Industry

VDI solution hosting for B2B clients

Solutions

- Rented dedicated compute and storage solutions in a Tier III+ data center in the Paris area (private cloud).
- HPC-based infrastructure with low-latency network connectivity.
- 2CRSi servers built on Intel® Server System S9200WK featuring 2nd Gen Intel® Xeon® Platinum 9200 processors (384 cores in 2U system).
- Direct Liquid Cooling (DLC) or water cooling with reuse of waste heat.

Business results

- **5000**
VDI users migrated to Tier III+ data center in France
- **99.99%**
guaranteed uptime of the VDI service
- **+35%**
better energy efficiency through Direct Liquid Cooling, thus reducing operating and hosting costs
- **Switch from CAPEX to OPEX**, and refocus on core business

Hosted VDI-as-a-Service Enables Data Sovereignty and Massive Scalability

When France went into a nationwide lockdown in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LINKOFFICE – an “office linkup” virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) provider for B2B companies – immediately took the necessary measures to help their customer base of mainly accounting firms transition to a “work from home” environment. 5,000 employees were successfully onboarded within less than 48 hours, whilst ensuring their business continuity.

In the following weeks and months, many more companies came with urgent requests to change their infrastructure to a VDI service to enable reliable and secure remote working.

“Many accounting firms were just not ready for this new work-from-home paradigm. Their IT infrastructure was installed locally without remote access,” explained Eric Auvray, CEO of LINKOFFICE. **“They came to us, but we could not take on all new clients fast enough as our data centers were at maximum capacity. It was really frustrating not being able to cope with this spike.”**

At the same time, due to GDPR regulations, COVID-related travel restrictions and Brexit, LINKOFFICE faced a sudden increase in requests from customers asking for their data to be stored and managed locally in France.

To address these data sovereignty concerns and quickly scale their storage capacity without having to buy and maintain their own infrastructure, LINKOFFICE decided to repatriate their data from Bulgaria and Luxemburg into a single data center near Paris, which is owned and managed by the French global tech group 2CRSi.

“We knew that by choosing 2CRSi, we would have a local partner who would be able to support us in our long-term growth and provide us with flexibility, quality service and expertise. We have known 2CRSi for a long time now and have built a trusting relationship with them.”

- Eric Auvray, CEO and Cofounder, LINKOFFICE

LINKOFFICE wanted to achieve the following 5 objectives:



1. Scalability: Switch from a self-owned data center to a tailor-made rented private cloud that is quickly scalable without large upfront investments.



2. High performance: Access to the latest server technology powered by best in-class components to ensure system responsiveness under heavy load and thus improve the customer experience.



3. Customer proximity and compliance: Repatriate data to France to ensure data sovereignty and GDPR compliance. Benefit from faster local technical support and expertise.



4. Green IT: Utilize an energy- and cost-efficient solution with attractive pricing, thanks to virtualization, Direct Liquid Cooling (DLC) and the reuse of waste heat.



5. Expand and focus on core business: By outsourcing the IT infrastructure to a specialized partner, gain more time to actually add value for the end clients of LinkOffice, and expand towards other market segments.

For the implementation of the new platform and the migration of LINKOFFICE's user data, the 2CRSi team is skillfully retro-engineering the existing platforms in Bulgaria and Luxemburg and has started migrating the 5000 VDI users to Paris – often at night and/or during the weekend, to ensure business continuity during the day for the users. With 20% of users already moved in January 2021, the migration process is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2021.

The new VDI platform is hosted in a Tier III+ data center and consists of:



2 dedicated racks, with the ability to quickly add more racks whenever demand surges.



2CRSi servers with Direct Liquid Cooling and 2nd Gen Intel® Xeon® Platinum 9200 processors: the most scalable and dense Xeon® platform Intel Server System S9200WK to date (384 cores in 2U system, allowing the consolidation of servers with fewer nodes, generating the same level of performance in a much smaller space).



Installation, integration and maintenance of the VDI environment (Virtual PCs based on VMware Horizon and Microsoft Windows) by 2CRSi.

Environmentally friendly VDI platform drives down operating costs

As requested by LINKOFFICE, the 2CRSi solution costs are equivalent to those of the data centers previously used outside of France.

“Having the right technology partnerships is key in our industry,” explained Raphael Monten, VP - Head of Cloud Business at 2CRSi. **“Thanks to our close partnership with Intel®, we were able to select the solution which meets our customers’ criteria in terms of performance, cost-effectiveness, space and scalability, combined with our liquid-cooling hosting services.”**

The high-density of the 2CRSi servers implies not only fewer server nodes for the same performance, but also requires fewer network connections, and fewer power supplies, thus reducing hosting costs. Plus, Direct Liquid Cooling means that 2CRSi can use free cooling all year, no matter the outside temperature, and thereby reduce energy consumption and related operating and hosting costs.

“The Direct Liquid Cooling system we use in our Nanterre data center is 35% more energy efficient than traditional air cooling” explained Grégory Tourneux, co-founder of Green Computing, a joint subsidiary of Azur Datacenter and 2CRSi.

But Direct Liquid Cooling also comes with a second benefit: Green Computing has deployed a system to re-use the waste heat, which again helps to further reduce the environmental footprint and operating costs – benefits which 2CRSi shares with their customer LINKOFFICE.

Going after new markets – supported by a scalable yet green VDI compute platform

With this scalable and green IT hosting solution in place, LINKOFFICE wants to focus more on their own core added value towards their customers and quickly expand their customer base beyond accounting firms and towards small and medium-size companies – in France and abroad.

“Hardware is no longer our core business, and we have decided to switch from a CAPEX towards an OPEX model that allows exponential growth and gives us more time with our customers. Before migrating to 2CRSi with their complete IT solution including managed services, it easily took us 5 to 6 months to add new storage. Nowadays, the whole process takes just 1 to 2 months and is very simple – we issue the order and that’s it. With this flexibility and fast turnaround, we can refocus, grow, and react much quicker to market demands. We no longer lose prospective customers due to capacity bottlenecks.”
Eric Auvray, CEO and Co-founder, LINKOFFICE

Contact us today to find out more on how 2CRSi solutions can help your business.

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