

# Rimini Street®

## Managing the Impact of Desktop OS Upgrades in the Enterprise

### THE INEVITABLE DESKTOP OS UPGRADE CYCLE

Desktop computer operating systems are frequently upgraded, and those upgrades offer new features, capabilities and productivity enhancements. Hidden under those new features are subtle changes to the operating system designed to make everything work smoothly – except perhaps for legacy ERP systems that were finely tuned to work with the old desktop engine. Upgrading hundreds of desktop operating systems is daunting enough in itself – but you are also faced with potential breakdowns in business-critical order entry, payroll and customer service applications. When upgrading any of your technology stack components, special care must be taken to preserve and protect your existing stable ERP system.

### PROTECTING ERP SYSTEMS DURING DESKTOP UPGRADES

Upgrading desktop operating systems may be inevitable but your ERP system can remain stable for years. You can keep the layers of your technology stack independent by following Rimini Street's counseling on encapsulation. With a strategy of encapsulation you leverage various technologies to isolate legacy ERP code from external changes to clients, servers, operating systems and networks. The most common encapsulation techniques are:

- ▼ **OS configuration and tuning** for compatibility
- ▼ **Desktop virtualization** enabling the older OS to coexist with the newest version
- ▼ **Application virtualization** allowing older application releases to operate within the newer OS

Each of these techniques has advantages, constraints, and degrees of cost-effectiveness depending on your overall IT infrastructure, and a combination of techniques may be the best solution. Rimini Street uses all three techniques as appropriate to help clients maintain their systems and lower the total cost of ownership.

### OS COMPATIBILITY TUNING

While it's unusual for an OS upgrade on the desktop to result in the inoperability of existing applications, tuning may be necessary to enable all functionality to continue working correctly. Rimini Street has a great deal of experience helping clients configure their desktop operating systems to maintain compatibility and interoperability with other layers of the technology stack. The ERP system in particular may need to have some desktop runtime applications reconfigured, or operating system DLLs replaced, to ensure continued compatibility. These tuning and reconfiguration changes at the desktop level ensure that ERP applications continue to run smoothly without upgrading or changing code in the core system.

### STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY CAPABILITIES

Rimini Street provides interoperability, upgrade flexibility and security and compliance guidance that extend the overall life of your systems. We provide end-to-end services and can show you how to avoid the expense of upgrading other parts of your technology stack and extend the life span of your IT investment while containing the total cost of ownership. Rimini Street employs experienced technology engineers to respond to your changing and dynamic IT environment. Our experts can:

- **Insulate existing technology** to protect, preserve and extend the life of applications.
- **Guide you in the application of a holistic approach to security** to keep systems compliant without constant patching.
- **Enhance interoperability** with innovative middleware solutions that keep your enterprise applications working as technology stack layers come and go.
- **Enable new features and functionality** with customizations and add-ons that play well with legacy systems.
- **Future-proof your system** and provide expertise on legacy technology as IT strategy changes.

“Running older enterprise software releases, we have to be aware of potential interoperability issues. That's why virtualization is great: it takes us completely out of the loop of any technology updates we want to do to the desktop.”

– IT Dev Manager at 18,000-employee Canadian Lottery and Gaming Corporation

## DESKTOP VIRTUALIZATION

Incorporating virtualization software – such as Citrix Virtual Desktop – into the technology stack is one way to ensure that existing desktop applications continue to work with an ERP system when the desktop operating system is upgraded. The virtual desktop of the older OS (running on a server) can be accessed remotely through the new OS, allowing the older applications to run unchanged. So, for example, a desktop spreadsheet that loads data from the ERP accounts receivable application can continue operating in the same way, without changing any code on the core ERP system or updating the spreadsheet software.

## APPLICATION VIRTUALIZATION

A variant on the virtual desktop is a method of running an older desktop application on an upgraded OS machine. Application virtualization, also a key Citrix capability, encapsulates a desktop application that interacts with the ERP system. Rimini frequently uses this technology strategy to keep important but not widely used ERP applications available to a group of users. In this scenario, the two components – desktop application and ERP system – can continue to interoperate regardless of what operating system is installed on the desktop.

## CLIENT SUCCESS WITH DESKTOP UPGRADES

A county department of administrative services needed to continue to run its existing releases of PeopleSoft PeopleTools and client-side applications as it migrated its desktop operating systems to Windows 7. Initially the department believed the desktop migration would force it to upgrade the PeopleSoft ERP as well – even though the version of PeopleSoft was working well in all other ways. Rimini Street guided this public sector client to virtualize its desktop environment using Citrix, so that PeopleTools could continue running as a virtual application on the Windows 7 OS. The virtualized technology stack enabled the PeopleSoft system to remain untouched as the organization upgraded its desktops to Windows 7.

Rimini Street extends the overall life of your vital ERP systems while reducing TCO by focusing on usability, performance, interoperability, security and compliance.



## VIRTUALIZING DESKTOP OPERATING SYSTEMS FOR ERP SYSTEMS

Upgrading desktop operating systems and applications is often a business necessity. Protecting a mature ERP system from external changes is even more important. Rimini Street counsels clients to encapsulate their legacy ERP systems to enable changes in their dynamic IT environment while preserving business-critical ERP processes. Desktop and application virtualization can protect and preserve your existing ERP system.

## RIMINI STREET TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION BRIEFS

This document is one in a series of Rimini Street Technology Solution Briefs.

ERP applications typically include a wealth of features and functions. However, as elements of the total system landscape change and evolve – mobile devices, operating systems, browsers – ERP applications are under constant pressure to keep pace with their surrounding environment.

Each Technology Solution Brief describes a single infrastructure issue common to legacy enterprise applications and describes the types of solutions offered by Rimini Street as part of our standard support services.

## CONTACT RIMINI STREET FOR MORE INFORMATION

There is no “one size fits all” solution to upgrading desktop operating systems while preserving your ERP systems. Contact Rimini Street for an in-depth discussion of your specific ERP landscape and upgrade plans.