



Scapa[®] Test and Performance Platform

• Stress Testing • Soak Testing • Benchmarking • Performance Optimization • Migration Testing • Diagnostic Testing
 • Load Testing • Scalability Testing • Reliability Testing • Bottleneck Identification • Performance Comparison • Right Sizing Systems
 • Capacity Test • Performance Testing • Performance Tuning • Maximizing User Densities • Server Consolidation Testing • Service Availability

Swiss Re

Swiss Re



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<http://www.swissre.com>

Operating in more than 20 countries, and with a presence on all continents, Swiss Re is one of the world's largest and most diversified reinsurers. We complement our proven reinsurance portfolio for Property & Casualty and Life & Health with insurance-based corporate finance solutions and services for comprehensive risk management.

NOTE: The information and quotes provided in this case study were created by Declan Kane, Vice President of Information Technology at Swiss Re and supplied to Scapa Technologies.

“...we looked very closely at all the market players and, quite simply, Scapa emerged as the only solution that would deliver the level of detail we wanted regarding the end-user experience.”

– Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

The Business Problem

User Densities, Capacity, Scalability, Performance, Reliability and User Experience

Swiss Re, one of the world's largest and most diversified reinsurers, is no stranger to assessing and managing risk. When it came to implementing a Virtual Desktop System for over 10,000 users across the entire company to replace their thick client desktop solutions, they knew that testing the capacity, scalability and performance of their Citrix® XenDesktop® implementation would be necessary in order to:

- minimize the risk of encountering any system issues,
- maximize the return on their investment, by right sizing the hardware requirements to maximize user densities, and
- validate vendor promises, while delivering an end-user experience comparable to their existing thick client solution.

The Solution

Scapa TPP, the professionals' capacity planning tool of choice.

Scapa Technologies is an Independent Software Vendor with a unique and powerful testing tool: Scapa Test and Performance Platform (TPP). Scapa TPP is the only test tool with the power, flexibility and feature list required for proper and accurate reliability, performance, capacity and scalability testing of Virtual Applications, Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), and Desktop Virtualization solutions from Microsoft®, Citrix®, VMware® and others. With a highly scalable engine technology, tests can be scaled to hundreds of thousands of users, using any automated GUI scripting tool of choice – such as WinTask, AutoIT, .Net™ etc.

Testing Solutions For:

- Citrix Virtual Apps
- Citrix Virtual Desktop
- Microsoft Terminal Services®
- Microsoft Remote Desktop Services®
- VMware View Horizon
- Other Solutions (enquire for details)

Why Swiss Re Selected Scapa TPP

It became apparent that in order to understand true end user experience based on Swiss Re's own customized workload, a full-featured, capacity, scalability and performance load testing tool from a company with proven experience in ensuring successful Citrix XenDesktop implementations was required. The solution had to recreate realistic user activity with the utmost fidelity and be flexible, able to cope with unexpected changes to the project. In addition, the supplier would have to provide services and be capable of implementing and delivering a testing solution at short notice against tight deadlines. The ability to repeat tests and to auto-recover load also became a requirement to ensure the reliability of the system over time, as it was decided that the implementation - targeted for use by the entire company, i.e. over **10,000** users - should be managed in stages.

Swiss Re looked at all the options in the Citrix XenDesktop testing space and quickly came to the conclusion that Scapa TPP was the best solution to fit their needs. Scapa Technologies has unparalleled experience in benchmarking, capacity validation, performance, reliability and scalability testing of Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), application and desktop virtualization solutions.

A Complete Understanding of End-User Experience

Performance and scalability characteristics are taken from the end user experience, in addition to the server side experience. Server side metrics and end user experience metrics are correlated within Scapa TPP to expose the performance and scalability of your system.

"As we [Swiss Re] were new to VDI and this type of testing we looked very closely at all the market players and quite simply Scapa emerged as the only solution that would deliver the level of detail regarding the end user experience we wanted." – Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

Swiss Re selected Scapa TPP to ensure the smooth implementation and continued use of their XenDesktop system, for the following main reasons:

- 1) Scapa TPP provides genuine, accurate end user experience at the desktop delivery end point. Both the server experience and end user experience can be measured.
- 2) Scapa TPP is flexible enough to be able to test custom workloads against the customer's application mix and usage scenarios.
- 3) Scapa TPP represented a low risk strategy to implementing the new VDI system and providing continual insight into the system's performance because of: Scapa Technologies' 10 years experience in testing Citrix, Terminal Server and, more recently, VMware View desktop delivery platforms combined with our ability to deliver quickly and effectively against tight deadlines. References from existing customers, such as Cisco, Deutsche Bank and CSC helped assure Swiss Re of our capabilities.
- 4) In addition, Scapa consultants work directly with the Scapa development team to ensure we are providing a best of breed solution within an agile, ever-changing environment.

Why Swiss Re Selected Scapa TPP

“We identified multiple showstoppers before any user even became aware of VDI. It is hard to put a financial value on IT credibility but we are all glad we used Scapa. We have only scratched the surface of its capability and look forward to going deeper to gain a deeper insight to our VDI environment” - Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

VDI User Session Density and Network Characteristics Discovery

Testing is essential in ironing out any unforeseen issues, in addition to developing an understanding of the maximal achievable user densities for each VDI solution. This allows valid promises regarding infrastructure and configurations for each solution to be discovered, ensuring that the end user experience is comparable to existing desktop delivery solutions.

“[We used Scapa TPP to] ...figure out user density and performance expectations when the system is highly-loaded.” - Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

Scapa TPP has a unique approach where tests can be pre-defined or run interactively. For the initial testing, Scapa consultants prefer to run tests interactively to have complete control over the user loads and user ramping (both into and out of the test).

During the first test, some benchmarking is performed in order to obtain the end user experience characteristics for the, in this instance, customized Microsoft Office workload under low load requests. Once the ‘low load benchmark’ has been obtained, load is subsequently increased and run at a steady state (or ‘fixed user count’) for a period of time which is sufficient to expose the user experience under the user count. This process is repeated until the reliability, performance and scalability signatures of the system are revealed in the graphical output. Further tests to uncover all other system issues can also be easily repeated as often as required.

By fixing problems before going live, you not only ensure the credibility of your IT systems but you will also save money. Insulate your systems from bottlenecks, reliability and scalability issues that affect the bottom line by testing with Scapa TPP.

“Without Scapa TPP, we wouldn't have discovered...serious reliability and scalability issues until going to pilot with live users...[these issues] would have severely affected the credibility of our VDI solution and limited the take up, so engaging Scapa was a critical step.” - Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

Why Swiss Re Selected Scapa TPP

Outcome

Although vendor configurations and best practices were implemented during the build of a pre-production, pilot system, it became apparent that there were serious reliability issues with the system under test - all was not well with the setup. Immediately, the value of testing with Scapa TPP was revealed. IT systems vary in their setup and application mix from organization to organization, from department to department, and in their use from user to user. It is imperative, therefore, when undertaking any changes, to ensure that you have a full understanding of your systems' strengths and its limitations in order to protect your business and deliver a return on your investment.

Scapa TPP provides the insight Swiss Re needs to ensure a smooth Citrix XenDesktop deployment throughout its business operations and to protect these operations and the business itself from the negative affects of system issues.

"We acquired the Scapa TPP tool and engaged Scapa services to get the best from the tool in short deadlines as this kind of testing is highly specialist. Scapa provided a consultant with terrific knowledge of the testing suite and virtual computing... Derek (Scapa Consultant) was an exceptional resource, (and one) we would happily engage again in the future. Our fast changing project environment was a potentially challenging one to work in, especially for an external, but (Derek) just got on with it. Once the pre-requisites were in place he was able to work alone and deliver results." -

Declan Kane, VP of Information Technology, Swiss Re

Unparalleled Customer Support from Scapa

Scapa Technologies takes pride in providing exceptional customer support to all of their customers. Scapa support services are delivered by consultants with proven field experience. Customers are assigned a dedicated consultant who will manage and answer support requests. Scapa does not outsource our support services to third parties. Scapa support services are supplied by consultants who have vast experience of Scapa TPP and unlike some other companies' support services, Scapa consultants have direct access to the Scapa developers, which enables Scapa to provide, what we like to think is the best support in this business.

Scapa Technologies (www.scapatech.com)

Scapa TPP is a best-of-breed performance testing tool for Virtual Desktop, Remote Desktop, Citrix® and BMC Software® Remedy® AR System®, with support for additional technologies (such as HTTP(s) protocols). All of the functionality is available in a single product (connectors purchased separately) and can be applied in combination.

Other Testing Solutions from Scapa: Scapa Test and Performance Platform has a unique level of integration with Remedy AR Server and ITSM™ architectures at the C API, Java API and the http mid-tier layer, and via other touchpoints - enquire for details.

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