

Banner Bank Improves Performance and Saves More than \$225,000 with Ivanti



Challenges

- Improve performance by increasing user density on Citrix virtual machines
- Support employee productivity and responsive customer service
- Avoid additional software licensing and hardware costs
- Accommodate future employee growth while controlling costs

Solution

Ivanti® Performance Manager

Benefits

- Doubled return on Ivanti investment through cost savings
- Increased user density by nearly four to one
- Improved productivity
- Reduced help desk calls and trouble tickets

Banner Bank, a Washington-chartered commercial bank, conducts business from 90 locations in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. As a community bank, it offers a wide variety of commercial banking services and financial products to individuals and to small- and medium-sized businesses and their employees.

The bank maintains a Citrix desktop environment that supports 150 applications and 1,000 employees. Many of the applications were resource intensive, causing the performance of Citrix virtual machines to degrade during spikes of activity. Performance issues affected not only employee productivity but customer service as well.

“We don’t just have teller and loan officer applications in our Citrix environment. We also have business systems for all of Banner Bank’s departments, as well as standard software platforms like Microsoft Office, Acrobat Reader, and Internet Explorer,” explains Mike Currie, Vice President and IT Group Manager for Banner Bank. “And these apps were just running away with us, especially around month-end processing, which involves a lot of report generation and printing large files on top of our daily activities of opening new accounts and processing loans.”

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*Mike Currie
Vice President and IT Group Manager
Banner Bank*

Struggling to Meet Capacity Demands

Currie needed to increase capacity – ideally without investing in more hardware and software licenses. “On an optimal day, we could get six to nine people on a Citrix machine,” continues Currie. “We couldn’t get past the memory limit on our servers unless we upgraded. When we started adding 10, 11, 12 people, we hit 80% resource utilization. One spike would start taking things down.”

The Bank needed more than 250 Citrix machines to keep pace with its workload, and there were constant complaints about applications locking up or not responding. “People used to log off one Citrix machine and onto another to try to boost performance,” Currie recalls. “We called them ‘server storms.’ The only thing we could do was spin up more machines, which consumed more and more blade server resources.”

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Relief with Ivanti Performance Manager

Working with Structured Communications, an Ivanti Platinum Partner, Banner Bank evaluated a number of potential solutions, ultimately choosing Ivanti Performance Manager. “At the vendor expos, everyone pointed us to Ivanti,” says Currie. “Ivanti was the most secure solution, the most robust solution, and the most popular solution from everyone I talked to. And it was easy to manage. You don’t need to be an expert at writing code.”

Starting with Performance Manager out-of-the-box, an engineer from Structured Communications installed and tested the solution. Then Currie put Performance Manager through its paces, throttling application CPU and RAM requirements and establishing resource thresholds. “We just started picking off our top offenders and giving them a ceiling,” observes Currie. “It paid for itself almost immediately.”

Performance Manager Delivers Measurable Results

With Performance Manager, Banner Bank increased average users per Citrix machine to 14 – a gain of 50%. After a subsequent Citrix upgrade at the bank, Ivanti enabled the bank to shrink its server count from 160 to 90. “It was a huge boost in scalability, performance, and user density per machine, almost four to one,” cites Currie.

As user experience improved, the number of calls to the service desk decreased. “When we open up at 9:00 a.m., we have 500 tellers starting their day,” Currie notes. “And we’re not getting that morning burst of calls. Support tickets have gone down. We’re not getting as many complaints about performance. It’s been a huge turnaround for us.” In fact, not only did Ivanti reduce the number of help desk calls, but it enabled support to cut average-time-to-answer by 28% and average-call-duration by 22%.

Ivanti produced a ripple effect in Banner Bank’s IT environment. Increasing user density meant that fewer virtual machines were required, which led to reductions in physical servers, storage, power, and rack space. “It was an opportunity to increase our density from the top down and save money going forward,” says Currie.

In addition, Ivanti enabled Banner Bank to:

- Avoid spending more than double its investment in Ivanti on new hardware and data-center software licensing, while supporting employee growth of up to 20%
- Accommodate growth of 50% without spending nearly \$250,000 on software licenses and hardware

Currie concludes, “Ivanti has met all our expectations and goals. And they don’t just have one product that’s perfect for us. They’re all perfect for us. We’re hoping to do a POC of Ivanti® Application Control this summer, and we’re very excited about that.”



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