Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide

Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. is a global company operating more then 700 full-service hotels in the luxury and upscale segment of the lodging industry. Starwood's brand names include Sheraton, Westin, The Luxury Collection, St. Regis, W, Ciga, and Four Points.

THE CHALLENGE

The Starwood Preferred Guest Customer Service group deals with members through its eleven offices across the world, including the Member Contact Center in Austin, Texas. With a rapidly growing employee base in Austin and its other locations, Starwood needed to find a high performance technology solution that reduced the space required per agent desktop. "We wanted to add to agent workspace areas by getting the PCs off the desk and by using flat screen monitors," says Director of Global Customer Service Klaus Buellesbach.

DISCOVERING CLEARCUBE

After researching several options, Starwood discovered ClearCube's centralized C3 architecture and decided that ClearCube's CPU Blades provided a viable alternative to standard PCs. The company's Austin training center began using the system as a test site.

ClearCube's innovative approach provides Starwood with Intel-based PC functionality by removing the PC from the user's desktop and placing it in a centralized and managed rack-mounted environment. Centralized PCs simplify the network topology by keeping all networked devices in one area, thus reducing desktop management needs. Managing inventory becomes much easier with all the PCs in one secure location. The centralized environment also prevents end users from tampering with hardware or software.

"Equipment security and desk space are important aspects in a call center environment," says Starwood Manager of Worldwide Central Reservations Technology Greg Collins. "ClearCube takes care of both needs. It removes the CPU Blade from the agent's desk so they can't load any random software that might impact operations, and it frees up desk space that comes at a premium."

THE CLEARCUBE EXPERIENCE

Starwood's IT staff likes the new system, says Collins. "Maintenance is confined to the equipment room where all of the CPU Blades are nested, and technicians only have to go one place to troubleshoot and upgrade." Swapping out a CPU Blade with a spare or replacement blade requires simply moving one RJ-45 connector within the rack, and full functionality is restored to the desktop within a matter of minutes.

ClearCube's "out-of-the-box" technology, which ensures easy installation and integration, and its exemplary service and support are one more reason Starwood chose to implement the C3 architecture. On a final note, says Buellesbach "The service has been great."

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> Greg Collins
> Manager, Worldwide Central
> Reservations Technology

Key Benefits:

- *Reduced space requirements*
- *Unprecedented control over computing and data assets*
- *High performance PC provides full functionality for employees*
- *Top-of-the-line service and support*