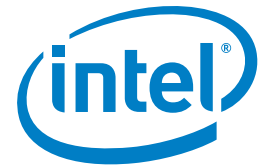


CASE STUDY

Intel® Core™ i5 vPro™ processor

Intel® Solid State Drives

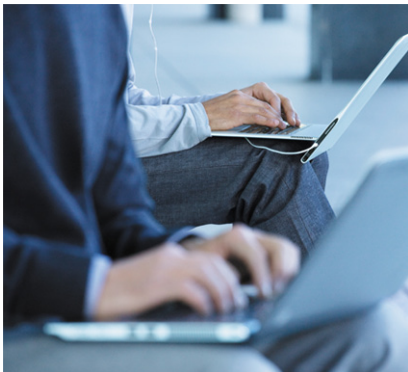
Mobility in the Enterprise



Professional Productivity

Grant Thornton LLP improves employee efficiency and customer service with two-year laptop refresh and Intel® client technologies

As a leading firm of accounting, tax, and advisory professionals, Grant Thornton LLP seeks to equip its employees with the tools to improve productivity and to continue delivering award-winning customer service. Nearly all employees use laptop computers, and they get a new one every two years. The latest refresh, with Intel® Core™ i5 vPro™ processors, Intel® Solid State Drives (Intel® SSDs), and Microsoft Windows* 7, provides “drastically better” performance and productivity, and will generate significant cost savings, according to Kirk Halliday, manager of Grant Thornton LLP’s Enterprise Systems Management Group.



“The better the technology is, the better the applications run, the happier people are with their jobs, the more productive they are, and the more likely they are to stay around. Our two-year lease cycle saves us money, and we think it also contributes to employee retention.”

– Kirk Halliday, Manager
Enterprise Systems Management
Grant Thornton LLP

CHALLENGES

- **Customer service.** Grant Thornton LLP’s professionals need high performance to run advanced applications so they can serve their customers most effectively.
- **Productivity.** For services firms, maximizing employee productivity and billable hours provides a path to higher revenues.

SOLUTION

- **Intel Core i5 vPro processors and Intel SSDs.** Grant Thornton LLP deployed a combination of new Lenovo ThinkPad* T410 and T410s laptops, both with the Intel Core i5 vPro processor, 8 GB of RAM, and 160 GB Intel SSDs. The laptops run Microsoft Windows 7 64-bit Enterprise, with Absolute Software’s Computrace* (asset tracking) and Credant’s Mobile Guardian* (data encryption) products to enhance security.

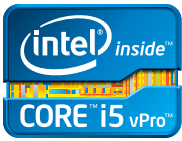
IMPACT

- **Measurable speedups.** Boot times have dropped an average of 66 percent from Grant Thornton LLP’s previous Lenovo* laptops, which used the Intel® Core™2 Duo processor, 3 GB of RAM, Microsoft Windows* XP, and a high-speed spindle drive. Deploying a new laptop now takes 1.5 to 2 hours, compared to 6 to 7 hours for the previous generation. Microsoft Outlook* opens as much as six times faster.
- **User and customer satisfaction.** With faster laptops, employees can accomplish more and deliver more personalized service. They also tend to be happier with their jobs and with IT.
- **Cost savings.** Intel estimates that Grant Thornton LLP will save about USD 627 per user from improvements to user productivity, disk reliability, and IT efficiency over the laptops’ two-year lifetime.¹ Planned activation of Intel® vPro™ technology will add further value.

Great People, Great Tools

Grant Thornton LLP professionals provide audit, tax, and advisory services to companies with complex operations and demanding business environments. Part of Grant Thornton LLP’s recipe for success: hire great people and give them great tools. That philosophy has earned Grant Thornton LLP a range of “best place to

work” awards along with recognition for outstanding customer service and thought leadership. It also led to a proactive client refresh policy that put Lenovo laptops with Intel Core i5 vPro processors and Intel SSDs in the hands of Grant Thornton LLP’s professional workforce.



User satisfaction with IT climbed as the rollout proceeded

“We’re not into technology for technology’s sake, but if we don’t have the technology to offer distinctive client service in an efficient and timely way, then clients end up taking their business elsewhere,” Halliday says. “The more IT can empower the business to be on top of technology and to do what they need, the better for Grant Thornton LLP. That’s how IT delivers strategic value.”

Advanced Performance for the Latest Applications

Grant Thornton LLP professionals rely on a variety of proprietary number-crunching tax and auditing suites, as well as on locally running database and business intelligence applications such as Microsoft SQL Server Express*. Grant Thornton LLP is quick to adopt new applications that can improve service and wants the applications to deliver a positive experience for end users—and the bottom line.

“Developers don’t create applications based on something that’s three or four years old,” Halliday says. “If you keep your PCs that long, you end up trying to run big, new applications on systems that don’t handle them well. Instead of adding value, you see a decrease in productivity. What we find is, the better the technology, the better the applications run, the happier people are with their jobs, the more productive they are, and the more likely they are to stay around.”

Grant Thornton LLP professionals have been on laptops for the last 13 years,

and Halliday says leasing the systems and refreshing them after two years is a money-saver for his company. “We get a higher residual value at the end of the lease than we would if we depreciated them over five years,” he comments. “We get all the advantages of the latest technologies, and IT doesn’t have to deal with the failures that occur with older systems.”

Positive Feedback from Business Users

The combination of the Intel Core i5 vPro processors, Intel SSDs, Windows 7, and more RAM has delivered major improvements in performance and productivity, Halliday observes. “We spent more than we did on the prior two-year lease, but what we gained in performance and productivity was drastically better,” he says. “We had fast spindle disks in the old laptops, but the Intel SSDs are so much faster that for the first time we’re able to take full advantage of the processor.”

The refresh also increased business users’ regard for IT. User satisfaction in the hardware metric rose from 6.2 to 7.9 on a 10-point scale during the rollout, and Halliday expects the figure to go even higher once the rollout is complete.

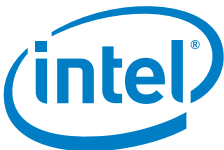
End-user feedback has been highly positive. During a pilot with performance-hungry tax advisors, one commented, “I love this new laptop. It is so fast, and I can’t believe how much more I can get done. I don’t have to give it back at the end of our pilot, do I?” Another was even more emphatic: “You’ll have to pry this laptop out of my hands to get it back.”

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1. Estimated using the Intel® Solid State Drive Total Cost of Ownership Mobile Client Estimator. http://www.intel.com/design/flash/NAND/tco_tool/demo.htm.

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