

Addressing the ROBO IT Paradigm



For remote or branch office managers seeking powerful yet manageable IT solutions, Dell PowerEdge VRTX fits the bill.

In the remote office, branch office (ROBO) IT paradigm, central IT organizations struggle to support distributed environments with the same service level that exists in the central office.

This often results in a host of challenges, from WAN latency and application performance to security and central database availability. Furthermore, many of the ROBO offices have little to no staff with IT experience, and struggle to provide the simplest IT services on their own—even print serving and other simple office workloads. This paper takes a close look at these pain points, and how business leaders can overcome these obstacles.



Understanding the issue

Whether the remote or branch office is part of a highly diffused multinational organization or a conglomerate with diverse business units, those office managers are tasked with customer experience and business growth, but lack the IT sophistication of central data centers from staffing to real estate.

Today's remote office, branch office (ROBO) environments host a number of IT functions that provide not only support for that office, but also core applications that connect to a centrally managed data center. Some organizations maintain tight standards to ensure across-the-board control for infrastructure and applications alike. However, most still end up supporting disparate hardware and software at the remote location, especially for organizations engaged in acquisitions and mergers.

As a result, the remote office paradigm presents a number of unique challenges, including complexity caused by the multiple systems management tools and consoles that come with disparate, nonstandard hardware; limited onsite or remote IT staff and expertise; as well as an ongoing struggle to securely protect the remote data pool.

"If you think about a real estate broker focused on handling hundreds of property listings, the IT complexity associated with managing a server is overwhelming," says Tony Logan, director, global enterprise strategists for Dell.

"Since branch managers cannot justify having personnel on staff to handle deployment of new hardware and software, the central office usually needs to send, or contract a local IT expert to the location to do the integration. The challenge multiplies over time when issues arise and inexperienced staff are forced to troubleshoot localized issues. They want to sell real estate and they don't have time to get on the phone with tech support and describe what their application isn't doing correctly, or go into the back room to see if a light is blinking. They don't want to wait a couple of hours for a local IT contractor to show up to begin the process either."

Protecting data is also a serious concern in ROBO environments. "The branch manager has to answer some tough questions, questions that usually fall well outside in-house expertise: What do you do with the data in these remote locations in terms of risk avoidance? How do you get the data back in the event of a loss?" he says. "That data is the lifeblood of most organizations, and local storage of retail sales and inventory data or patient data needs to be consistent with central IT practices. Since this data is critical to the organization as a whole it therefore must be protected and in most cases transmitted to the centralized data center securely and in a timely fashion."



Seeking simplicity

In addressing the issues facing remote or branch office managers, the ability to find powerful solutions that are easy to deploy and manage is key. "The goal is to find simplified solutions that deliver the performance required to remain competitive without operational complexity that exceeds in-house capabilities," says Logan.

As a complete workload reference architecture of server, storage and networking in a 5U chassis, the Dell PowerEdge VRTX is emerging as a perfect solution for the remote or branch office environment.

Manageability. As a truly cost-conscious system designed for easy deployment, the Dell™ PowerEdge™ VRTX is capable of fresh-air cooling, and requires minimal space and air—meaning it easily fits within often tight space constraints that are common in branch office environments. It excels in a small, open-air environment such as a back room or inside a closet.

Additionally, Dell includes a unique systems management tool as part of the solution that gives the central IT staff a geographic view of all the PowerEdge VRTX solutions and their current health state. This capability further relieves the local staff from having to monitor and maintain the solution.

Performance. The Dell PowerEdge VRTX provides the remote or branch office with an on-site solution that yields the performance needed, yet can be managed centrally by corporate IT. "There is latency and lack of performance when they try the traditional remote approach," Logan says. "The Dell PowerEdge VRTX eliminates the frustration latency presents. Instead, they can get the performance they need without going to the cloud or trying to work remotely from the centralized data center that is 1,500 miles away."

Security. From simple human error to data corruption by viruses or catastrophic events, the need to protect data is an ongoing challenge. With Dell PowerEdge VRTX, the ability to easily integrate secure data backup into the solution makes it even more seamless. Dell solutions can provide local protection options based on your requirements and needs. "It's not just the hardware, it's the data protection as well," says Logan.

Bottom line: The Dell PowerEdge VRTX is the first IT solution designed from the ground up specifically for office environments, bringing simplicity, efficiency and versatility to ROBO IT.

Contact your account executive today to learn more about the Dell PowerEdge VRTX and how the scalable, easy-to-deploy system can seamlessly fit into your daily environment.

Dell PowerEdge VRTX Snapshot View

The pace of technology today requires that many organizations have the power of a data center, but the cost, size and manageability of a desktop.

With Dell PowerEdge VRTX, it's never been simpler to standardize, deploy, optimize and manage IT.

Powerful: High performing and virtualization ready, Dell PowerEdge VRTX incorporates the best ideas and efficiencies from large data centers.

Compact: At only 12"W X 19"H, Dell PowerEdge VRTX is optimized, secure and all with desktop acoustics for use in a regular office without special power or cooling. And at about 175 lbs./79 kg, it can be shipped and moved just about anywhere.

Converged: Every Dell PowerEdge VRTX includes high-performance PowerEdge server nodes, integrated storage, simplified integrated networking and enterprise-class manageability.

The Dell PowerEdge VRTX offers rack or standalone installation options, eight external PCIe slots and eight NIC ports, and runs off 100V–240V AC power.

Scalable: The Dell PowerEdge VRTX can house up to four server nodes and 48TB of storage. This makes for a scalable solution that can easily grow with the evolving needs of the business, effectively future-proofing the investment.

Manageable: The Dell PowerEdge VRTX features simple built-in monitoring and management, including integrated console with full enterprise-class tools for on-site or remote management.