

# Boulevard Brewing Company



### NAME

Boulevard Brewing Company

### LINE OF BUSINESS

Food & Beverage Manufacturing

### LOCATION

Kansas City, Missouri

### SOLUTION

Replaced PC workstations in the brewery and expanded the number of computing access points

### USERS

Brewers and operations staff

### GOALS

- Reduce production losses resulting from stalled runs due to locked up PC workstations
- Support for dual monitors and USB-based touch screen input devices used on production floor
- Expand the number of computing access points to help plant staff monitor production
- Increase operational efficiency with improved performance
- Improve the end user experience

### RESULTS

Eliminated production losses due to unresponsive computing resources while increasing fivefold the number of computing access points for brewery employees

Boulevard Brewing Company in Kansas City, Missouri, is the largest locally owned brewery in Missouri and one of the largest craft breweries in the country, producing 140,000 barrels of craft beer annually with expansion plans under way to increase capacity by 25 percent. Plans to expand production comes on the heels of the construction of a new brew house just over three years ago, which brought with it a new software system for controlling the flow of ingredients and managing the brewing process.

While the new software system performed well, the three workstations that came with it proved to be too few and far between throughout the plant for the brewers. They were also too expensive to replicate and alarmingly inconsistent. Locked up workstations on several occasions meant ingredients were stalled at different points in the beer-making process and on several occasions they soured, costing thousands of dollars.

## The PC Liability

“The PCs were locally controlling processes and represented a huge liability because if something goes down, the whole process stops. And if we go down, we can’t make beer,” said Tony Lux, whose creative title of Purveyor of Technology at Boulevard means he heads IT. “And it happened multiple times. A PC locked up and the ingredients had to be dumped.”

Boulevard virtualized its servers in 2007. The company manages a data center with three VMware ESX hosts running 35 virtual machines. When Lux started examining options for distributed computing, he considered using dumb PCs as access points as well as Wyse thin clients. Lux quickly ruled out those options. Dumb PCs wouldn’t eliminate some of the challenges, and the thin clients he tried were buggy and had problems supporting the touch screen monitors that Boulevard used with the brewery system. Lux also wanted dual monitor support.

Lux, who likes to stay on top of new technologies and frequently attends classes and networking events to stay current, was attend-

ing a class on VMware technology and mentioned his frustration with the Wyse thin clients he had tried. Another attendee at the class suggested Lux try out Pano Logic, explaining that Pano Logic's zero client devices would support touch screens as well as USB connections and dual monitor support. At that time, in early 2008, Pano Logic required one device per monitor. However, the company has since released dual monitor support from a single device. Lux ordered a demo kit and took it for a trial run. It was an instant success.

*"Now that we've ripped out the PCs and replaced them with Pano Logic virtual desktops, we haven't had a single mishap. And, we were able to afford to expand the number of locations where plant staff and brewers can access the system and perform the necessary tasks."*

— Tony Lux,  
Purveyor of Technology  
Boulevard Brewing Co.

## **Simplicity Discovered**

"The devices were simple and did everything we wanted them to do," said Lux. There was a minor issue with the screen resolution. Pano Logic, at that time, could support just one resolution with that particular monitor. Lux alerted Pano Logic, which contacted the monitor manufacturer and had one shipped over so their engineers could resolve the mystery. "Not a lot of companies would do that. I called Wyse about some of the problems I was having and got a verbal shrug. But Pano fixed it."

Boulevard has 20 Pano Logic virtual desktops installed throughout the brewery. While Boulevard only replaced three PCs with virtual desktops, the savings and impact on the operations has been immense. For one thing, the brewery hasn't had a single instance of ingredients souring during the process because of a frozen PC. But the low cost of Pano Logic virtual desktops – starting at \$319 compared to \$1,500 for the workstation – meant Boulevard could dramatically expand the number of computing access points throughout the brewery.

## **Multiple Access Points**

The convenience factor of having so many more system access points located throughout the brewery's facilities was a huge hit for workers. At one point in the process, plant workers had to manage the controls from a workstation but then race down several flights of stairs to visually monitor the equipment. Lux was able to add a virtual desktop to put an end to that.

What's more, with access points to the entire system, plant workers can monitor progress and move ingredients and processes forward from almost anywhere they happen to be on the property, even if they don't happen to be in the brew house.

"No matter where they're at, they can see what's happening at any point in the process," Lux said. "Now that we've ripped out the PCs and replaced them

with Pano Logic virtual desktops, we haven't had a single mishap. And, we were able to afford to expand the number of locations where plant staff and brewers can access the system and perform the necessary tasks. Having such expanded access and being able to see what's happening at any point in the process has enabled the staff to avert some real problems."

### **For More Information**

For more Pano System case studies across a range of industries please visit [www.panologic.com/case-studies](http://www.panologic.com/case-studies). You can also get more information on how zero client VDI can help you reduce the cost and complexity of desktop computing with the Pano Logic TCO Calculator at [www.panologic.com/tco](http://www.panologic.com/tco).

You can reach us via email at [sales@panologic.com](mailto:sales@panologic.com) or by calling 650-454-8940 or 877-677-PANO toll-free.

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