



Review of Aqua Connect Terminal Services

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INTRODUCTION

After a recent briefing, the Kusnetzky Group will review Aqua Connect's Terminal Services, place it into the Kusnetzky Group model of virtualization, determine which user segment would be best suited for this technology and present a quick analysis of the company's strengths and weaknesses. The review will also include a quick survey of the opportunities and competitive threats the company faces.

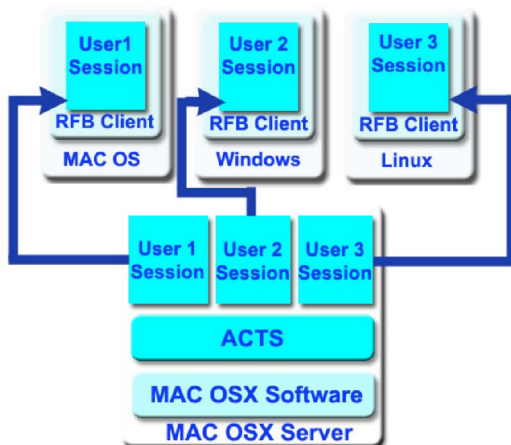
QUICK REVIEW OF AQUA CONNECT TERMINAL SERVICES

Aqua Connect Terminal Server presents the Macintosh® experience from OS X®-based servers to a portfolio of diverse hardware and software platforms as well as mobile devices using graphically enhanced terminal emulation. In short, applications believe that they're communicating with one of their own terminals rather than a foreign device. This is accomplished by using either the Remote Frame Buffer (RFB) protocol or the X-Windows protocol, X11R6.

The Aqua Connect Terminal Server can support any Mac OS X®-based program and supports existing Mac OS X 32/64-bit computers with either PowerPC® or Intel® architecture. There are some limitations at this point. The company does not currently support 3D accelerated applications, audio applications or applications that require local device access, such as a local camera.

AQUA CONNECT ARCHITECTURE

Aqua Connect Terminal Server is composed of three components. They are a server daemon, a remote frame buffer and a graphical user administration tool. Let's briefly look at each of these components:



Server Daemon — this is a process that runs in the background that allows a Mac OS X-based server to host many client sessions simultaneously.

Remote Frame Buffer (RFB) — this component of the Aqua Connect Terminal Server transfers display information from the host Mac OS X environment to VNC-enabled clients via the RFB thin-client protocol. By design, RFB protocol makes very few demands on the client environment, so that RFB clients can run on the widest range of hardware with minimal implementation.

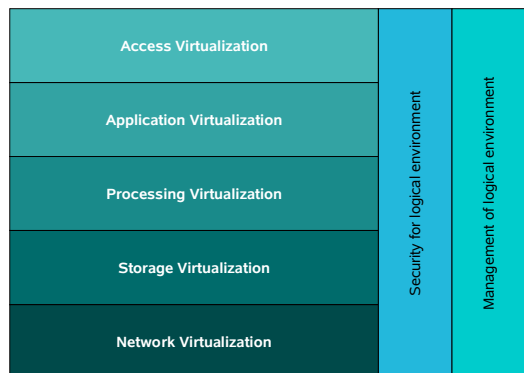
Graphical User Administration Tool: This Graphical User Interface (GUI) enables you to administer the Aqua Connect Terminal Server remotely in an intuitive, simple-to-use environment. Administrative functions include switching terminal services on an off, managing client user accounts, and shadowing of user sessions for training and support.

Note: Version 1 is limited to 2D software and does not support broadcast audio.



WHERE DOES ACCESS VIRTUALIZATION FIT IN?

Access virtualization is an important component of an efficient IT infrastructure. It allows organizations to take into account of a staff member's computing environments actually are when providing each of them a desktop or mobile device. Some staff members need the most powerful desktop or mobile computer that is currently available. Others would be best served by a much more modest device. In many organizations, a large percentage of the staff needs access to computing solutions on a daily basis but, don't really want or need a complex, powerful computer on their desk.



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Access virtualization makes it possible for Individuals to access applications running in virtual machines on servers or blade PCs that are located in the datacenter. Sometimes this access virtualization technology is known as "presentation services" or "terminal services." Individuals use a PC running special software or a very lightly configured limited function computing device known as a "thin client" to access their applications and data.

Benefits of this approach include greater levels of security and reliability; lower costs of client administration and, in the case of thin clients, the device can be seen as an information appliance rather than a computer. A network connection, however, is required to make this approach work and so, highly mobile staff members would not be able to use this as their primary means of using application solutions.

WHAT SEGMENT OF THE USER POPULATION WOULD FIND THIS MOST VALUABLE?

There are segments of the user population in most organizations that would benefit greatly from virtual access. Other segments would receive far fewer benefits. Let's review each of the user segments:

- Developers — these individuals usually need the maximum amount of power and flexibility that a desktop environment can provide. Often times, this also means that they are not candidates for a virtual access solution.
- Knowledge workers — these individuals quite often need similar power and flexibility but, some of them could be quite productive using a virtual access solution.
- Task-oriented workers — these individuals typically use specialized applications and don't need all of the flexibility of their own personal computing environment. They just need to access applications and data that make their function possible. A virtual access solution is likely to be the best for this class of users.

SNAPSHOT ANALYSIS

Here is a snapshot analysis of Aqua Connect's solution.

STRENGTHS

Aqua Connect has seen a need and has provided useful technology where there were few alternative solutions. Furthermore, Aqua Connect will be able to rely upon help and support from Apple Computer because Aqua Connect's Terminal Services allow the company to better place its Mac OS X-based server solutions in organizational datacenters,

WEAKNESSES

Regardless of the strengths of Aqua Connect's technology, it faces the same challenges that plague all emerging technology companies. With the exception of those who already are part of Apple's loyalists, most IT decision makers have not heard of the company or its products. As with all emerging companies, Aqua



Connect has a limited budget for marketing campaigns and will need to be very creative to be able to successfully educate these decision makers about the company's products and how they will help.

OPPORTUNITIES

As Mac OS X-based servers are increasingly found in organizational data centers, Aqua Connect's potential market grows as well. While this is a somewhat limited market when compared to that created by Microsoft with its Windows Server products, it still could be quite lucrative for an emerging technology supplier, such as Aqua Connect.

THREATS

At this point, the competitive treats come from other application environments rather than other virtual access companies in the Mac OS X market place. If IT decision makers choose a Windows, UNIX or Linux solution, Aqua Connect's products are largely irrelevant. If they've chosen to deploy a Mac OS X-based solution, Aqua Connect's products would clearly be very attractive and very well may be the only choice.

S U M M A R Y

It would be wise for IT decision makers relying on Apple Mac OS X-based solutions to know about Aqua Connect and its products. As Apple is able to find its way into the organizational datacenter, other IT decision makers might also find it beneficial to know about this company.