anunta

Whitepaper

THE GLOBAL CIO'S POST-CITRIX MIGRATION BLUEPRINT

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Executive Summary

The enterprise virtual desktop environment has been shaken up significantly since the last decade, when it was led by Citrix as one of the long-standing leaders in the industry. This reset is a direct result of Omnissa's acquisition by Broadcom, which has created a totally independent EUC (End User Computing) alternative in Omnissa Horizon. Additionally, there is a large amount of pricing pressure from Cloud Software Group. Therefore, CIOs will now have to make difficult decisions regarding which platform to use and do so quickly, usually with limited information about the cost of doing so in the long term.

Anunta has completed over 40 global enterprise engagements and has discovered that when companies do not take the time to complete their cost models, total cost of ownership is substantially greater, and operational flexibility is significantly less.

The stakes are very real for companies, and an average of 18 months exists between the point where companies will renew their agreement with Citrix and when they move to a new platform. Rolling back from a migration to a new platform can consume 60% to 80% of the original amount invested. Furthermore, while licensing is the most important figure to vendors in the computing platform space, it actually only accounts for 35% to 45% of total cost exposure.

This white paper is both based on real-world examples and implemented with current research to provide the end user with an example to follow when making the above-mentioned decisions.

A decision framework for selecting which cloud platform to use based on financial, infrastructure, workforce, and regulatory factors. A better TCO study, providing the total cost of ownership over the lifetime of the platform and capturing regional cost variances that significantly impact cloud platform economics. Case studies on real-world migrations executed by Anunta across both platforms. A seven-phased migration strategy based on actual enterprise delivery experiences. A 90-day assessment process for initiating a pilot deployment. The conclusion of this analysis is unequivocal; there are no one-size-fits-all solutions when it comes to cloud platforms. Each company will have its own best-fit design; however, developing one requires a structured, data-driven approach.

Choosing Between Azure Virtual Desktop & Omnissa Horizon

A structured decision framework, a validated 3-year TCO model, and a phased migration playbook derived from Anunta's live engagements across 40+ global enterprises.

3–5×

TCO variance between platforms, geography and workload dependent

62%

of APAC/EMEA stable-workforce deployments where Horizon delivered superior 3-year economics

18 months

is the average window between the Citrix renewal decision and full migration completion

1M+

enterprise users migrated by Anunta across NA, EMEA, and APAC

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What You Will Learn

Discover how global CIOs and IT leaders are reducing Citrix migration risk with Anunta's data-driven framework for choosing between Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) and Omnissa Horizon. Explore validated 3-year TCO models, compliance-ready VDI strategies, regional cost optimization, and proven migration from Anunta's experience across global enterprise transformations.

01 The Disruption Is Real, And the Clock Is Running

Three driving forces are causing urgency:

1. Externally imposed decision cycles, such as contract renewals and license changes, create fixed timelines and leave little time for transition
2. Less than half of the total cost comes from software licenses; computer usage, transfers across networks, compliance overhead, labor rates, and migration services account for the remainder.
3. A large number of multi-national organizations operate globally but have not evaluated their needs and costs prior to making a single-platform decision.

The 3 macro forces that drive urgency are: Externally imposed decision cycles - contract renewals, licensing changes, and price increases create fixed timelines for decision-making, reducing the ability for organizations to take time with the decision-making process.

Organizations must consider the **total cost of ownership (TCO)** of a platform versus just the software licensing, as TCO is generally 50%+ of TCO for a platform when measured across all costs associated with the use of that platform (i.e. compute consumption, transfer of data, compliance with regulations, etc.) would expose the organization to a systematic over- or underestimation of the costs associated with a platform.

Multinational organizations operate across diverse regulatory environments. Since no single platform architecture fits all needs, relying on a single-platform approach leads to platform overspending.

02 Why Most Platform Decisions Are Structurally Flawed

In light of the strategic significance of this transition, the majority of companies do not apply sufficiently broad platform selection frameworks. The consequences includ e misaligned investments, preventable operational friction, and cost increases that grow over time.

1. The Licensing Trap

Vendor proposals are similar in that they primarily use licensing to establish a quote comparison. However, licensing only accounts for a fraction of the true costs. The chart below shows the total difference:

Cost Dimension	What Vendors Show	Actual Enterprise Impact
Software Licensing	Fully visible	35–45% of the total cost
Compute Infrastructure	Simplified estimates	High variability in always-on environments
Network & Bandwidth	Rarely included	Significant in APAC and LATAM
IT Operations Labor	Generic assumptions	Region-specific cost variability
Migration & Pro Services	Often excluded	15–25% of total TCO
End-User Support	Not modeled	Direct impact on operational cost
Training & Reskilling	Omitted	3–5% of Year 1 spend
Compliance & Regulation	Ignored	8–15% additional cost in regulated sectors

2. Platform Bias Over Evidence

Evidence Over Platform Bias. The familiarity of the Microsoft ecosystem leads many organizations to default to AVD, while prior Omnissa investments lead others to default to Horizon. Both approaches are valid for starting points, but not necessarily for concluding a decision without validation against actual patterns of workforce and costs by location, and numerous regulations. Anunta's delivery data demonstrates that organizations that base their decisions on internal alignment and not structured models average a 15-30% higher 3-year TCO.

3. The Regulatory Blindspot

Compliance Compliance with various compliance frameworks, such as the GDPR, India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, and sector-specific regulations in financial services and healthcare, has a non-linear and predominantly "invisible" cost implication as related to the vendor's estimation.

Regulatory environments, specifically in EMEA and APAC, have compliance overhead at 8-15% of effective AVD TCO, and are absent in all other vendor proposals reviewed by Anunta.

03 The Four-Axis CIO Decision Framework

Selecting a platform is a fiscal decision. Act accordingly.

Anunta's framework evaluates four axes. No single axis is decisive, but a combination of axes generates clear directional guidance 85% of the time for enterprises.

Axis 1
Cloud Financial Model
OpEx Variability vs. CapEx Predictability

The AVD usage-based pricing model rewards variable workforces with seasonality, like distributed contractors or truly unpredictable demand. The subscription model of Omnissa Horizon rewards scale and predictability with a large and consistent user population, by offering users predictable cost curves and the acceleration of economics over time.

The biggest pitfall in this analysis is assuming "cloud = cheaper" without analyzing actual utilization patterns. Always-on, high-density environments will always have more AVD compute data than vendors anticipate. Anunta Analytics has documented that Horizon capex models achieve breakeven with AVD between months 14 and 22, after which time Horizon will win consistently.

Directional Indication - Variable Workforce or Seasonal - AVD. Stable and High-Density Workforce - Horizon

Axis 2
Existing Infrastructure Estate
Omnissa Depth Is the Strongest Horizon Predictor

Organizations that currently use HCI (Hyperconverged Infrastructure) or have a vSphere environment have been able to achieve lower effective TCO by 30%-40% due to the marginal cost of adding Horizon licenses onto an existing Omnissa estate being structurally lower than what would be calculated using a greenfield comparison. However, for organizations that do not have an Omnissa estate, this advantage disappears, and AVD will become structurally more competitive.

Directional signals: If an organization has an existing vSphere environment → the economics surrounding Horizon are compelling. If an organization does not have an existing Omnissa estate, AVD will be structurally advantaged.

Axis 3
Workforce Geography and Stability

There is a tendency to underweight this axis, yet it remains a consistently determining factor. The stable, shift-based/ regionally concentrated (APAC manufacturing, EMEA financial services, and Latin American BPO) have created a predictable licensing model (Horizon) that consistently generates better results than each of these, providing a predictable return. On the other hand, distributed, variable, or geographically spread working conditions favour an AVD consumption-based approach.

62% of Anunta's APAC and EMEA stable workforces show equivalent performance on the three-year economic modelling of both Horizon and have been measured against AVD performance by activities.

For example, in a high-latency WAN environment, the user experience measured by the Blast Extreme protocol is clearly superior to that of all other protocols, like Horizon, which directly impacts an employee's level of productivity compared to Traditional vs. AVD pricing. This analysis indicates that the average productivity of all employees in a high-latency WAN environment increases when AVD can implement the use of Blast Extreme over other protocols.

Directional signal: Stable/concentrated workforce in APAC/EMEA→Horizon; Distributed/variable/global-first → AVD or hybrid.

Axis 4
Regulatory and Data Residency
Compliance Cost Is a Material TCO Component

Compliance with regulatory frameworks such as GDPR, India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDP), and various sector-specific requirements for financial services, healthcare, and government adds multiple layers of compliance costs, which tend to disproportionately impact AVD's Cloud First architecture. Data residency requirements that require deploying a cloud infrastructure in the region where data resides, increased audits and security complexities related to Cloud, add 8% to 15% to AVD's overall total cost of ownership for regulated types

of businesses compared with the hybrid and on-premise deployment options of Horizon.

Compliance Factor	Impact on AVD	Impact on Horizon
Data Residency Requirements	Requires region-specific cloud deployment	Controlled on-premises or hybrid
Compliance Audit Overhead	Increased overhead	Lower incremental cost
Security Framework Complexity	Cloud-layer complexity	Infrastructure-level control
Estimated TCO Impact	+8–15%	Minimal incremental cost

Directional signal: Given the regulatory requirements for Financial Services, Healthcare, and Government in EMEA/APAC, Horizon Hybrid is the best solution. For Retail, Technology, and Professional Services with limited regulatory exposure, you may want to evaluate AVD.

04 Sector Platform Direction Summary

Sector	Recommended Direction	Primary Driver	Confidence
Financial Services	Omnissa Horizon Hybrid	Data residency and audit obligations	High
Healthcare	Omnissa Horizon	Endpoint variety and clinical workflows	High
Manufacturing	Omnissa Horizon On-Premises	Offline operations and OT integration	High
Retail	Azure Virtual Desktop	Seasonal workforce variability	High
Professional Services	AVD or Hybrid	M365 integration depth and Omnissa estate	Medium
Technology	AVD (M365-native)/ Horizon (multi-cloud)	Stack composition is decisive	Medium

05 From the Field: Two Platforms, Two Real Outcomes

These are not hypothetical scenarios. They are representative of the migrations Anunta has delivered across industries and geographies.

Case Study 1
Azure Virtual Desktop
Leading Indian Multinational Conglomerate

The Challenge

An Indian multinational company is one of the world's largest and most respected, but it has been experiencing some challenges when it comes to the accessibility of its existing Citrix VDI implementation. The company not only needed an easy-to-use and dependable platform that could support 9 different end-user profiles from various departments,such as marketing, finance, etc., but also needed to make sure that remote and 3rd party users have access to all data and applications without additional restrictions, while at the same time having a unique Domain Name System URL to match their corporate identity with their name.

The Solution

To overcome the challenges of their existing environment, Anunta performed an analysis of the client's current infrastructure and made recommendations based on that analysis. The recommendations included using Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) as a more efficient way to handle the company's infrastructure management complexity, reduce their overall operational complexity, allow for secure remote

access and device management, and improve compliance and increase the security of the company's applications and devices through the use of tools such as **Azure Active Directory integration and Multi-Factor Authentication.**

Anunta also configured Azure Front Door configurations to provide a custom domain name experience for the company, as well as developing solutions for resolving conditional access issues for remote users by providing AVD-related, customer-specific service exceptions for remote users after the service implementation was completed.

Key Outcomes

The migration successfully onboarded 100+ users with minimal downtime and improved accessibility for remote employees and interns. The deployment enhanced business continuity, simplified onboarding, improved user experience, strengthened security, and enabled smoother integration within the Microsoft ecosystem. The client also witnessed improved operational performance following the AVD implementation.

Case Study 2
Omnissa Horizon
Large Financial Enterprise

The Challenge

A large financial institution with approximately 8,000 branches and approximately 180,000 employees found that its existing virtual infrastructure was becoming prohibitively expensive and difficult to manage. The financial organization sought a more sustainable infrastructure that would continue to provide seamless and safe access to its users. In addition, many very large and complex legacy applications with significant double dependencies required careful integration to avoid causing disruption to critical business operations and functions.

The Answer

After conducting a thorough technical assessment of the client's existing infrastructure, security policies, and dependencies with legacy applications, Anunta determined that the Omnissa Horizon platform provided the right solution. Anunta managed the entire migration plan from the existing infrastructure to Omnissa Horizon and provided the means to migrate the legacy applications, thereby ensuring that there were no disruptions to business functions, as well as minimizing the downtime of all applications during the transition period. The migration plan also included priority consideration for uninterrupted business continuity and additional safeguards against keylogging threats to protect the confidentiality and security of financial services and customer information.

The Benefits

Anunta successfully migrated more than 16,000 users and more than 15 legacy applications to the Omnissa Horizon platform and completed the migration within 35 business days with zero downtime. Additionally, Anunta's optimized migration plan has resulted in an annualized cost savings of $8 million, while providing increased operational continuity and enhanced security throughout the entire virtual infrastructure environment.

06 The Eight-Dimension TCO Model

License comparisons are the starting point. They are not the answer.

Licensing captures as little as 35–45% of the actual total platform cost. Anunta's validated TCO model — refined across 40+ enterprise migrations — requires eight cost dimensions. Omitting any one of them systematically distorts platform decisions.

Cost Dimension	What Vendors Show	What a Complete Model Includes	Platform Risk
Software Licensing	Base license fee only	E3/E5 M365 requirements that inflate AVD's base cost for non-Microsoft shops	AVD understated in non-M365 orgs

Compute Infrastructure	List VM SKU pricing	Azure VM accumulation in always-on, high-density environments	AVD understated at high utilization
Network Egress & Bandwidth	Rarely mentioned	Material driver in APAC and LATAM; Blast Extreme protocol advantage for Horizon	AVD at risk in bandwidth-sensitive regions
IT Operations Labor	Vendor-staffed estimate	Geography-adjusted labor rates — Indian and Eastern European managed Horizon economics are compelling	Horizon is stronger in low-cost labor markets
Migration & Pro Services	Minimized or excluded	15–25% of 3-year TCO for complex multi-region deployments	Equal risk — plan for it explicitly
End-User Support & Helpdesk	Not modeled	Blast Extreme reduces helpdesk load in high-latency WAN — measurable in APAC CSAT scores	Horizon UX advantage in distributed APAC
Training & Reskilling	Omitted	Typically, 3–5% of Year 1 cost — frequently the largest unexpected spend item	Equal risk — budget for it
Managed Services Overlay	Steady-state only	APAC-staffed Horizon operations cut managed costs 35–45%; AVD normalized via platform tooling.	Platform-neutral with the right MSP

07 Geography Changes Everything: Regional TCO Profiles

The same platform can be optimal in one region and inefficient in another. Geography is a primary determinant of platform economics.

Region	Preferred Platform	Key Driver
North America	Azure Virtual Desktop	Labor cost structure and M365 ecosystem alignment
Western Europe	Horizon Hybrid	GDPR data residency requirements
Eastern Europe	Omnissa Horizon	Labor arbitrage and cost-effective on-premises operations
India / APAC	Omnissa Horizon	Compliance requirements and cost efficiency
Latin America	Omnissa Horizon	Pricing variability and infrastructure predictability

Organizations standardizing globally on a single platform consistently overpay compared to enterprises adopting regionally optimized architectures.

Anunta's recommended enterprise model is typically:

- North America → AVD
- APAC → Horizon
- EMEA → Horizon

08 The Seven-Phase Migration Playbook

The cost to remediating if you compress or skip phases is between 20% and 30% higher than that of organizations that perform all phases of the migration lifecycle.

Every one of Anunta's delivery teams executes their migration against the Anunta Migration Lifecycle Playbook that has defined gates and rollback criteria at each phase for both AVD and Horizon migrations.

Phase 1
Discovery and Assessmen

Citrix estate audit, user community, and use case profiling, application inventory, network topology, and latency mapping. Deliverable: Estate baseline report providing the factual basis for all decisions thereafter.

Phase 2
Validation of Platform Selection

Application of the Four Axis Framework against real company data. Validation of all TCO model assumptions against actual contract and infrastructure input to the company, and not vendor estimates. Deliverable: Recommendation of a platform with board-ready financial reasoning.

Phase 3
Pilot Architecture Design

Defines the scope for the production pilot. Validates protocol performance, security posture, and user experience benchmarks before broad rollout. Deliverable: Pilot Architecture Blueprint with defined success criteria for pilot.

Phase 4
Phased Rollout

Deployment to occur by business criticality and through waves with defined rollback criteria at each gate. No big bang migrations as they represent the single largest source of avoidable migration costs and operational disruption. Deliverable: Wave Plan with go/no-go gates to each wave.

Phase 5
Application Compatibility Remediation

Fix any compatibility issues between the application and hypervisor layer, with a focus on prioritizing business applications in the first few waves, and legacy tail applications are in the last wave.

Phase 6
Change Management and UX Transition

Create structured end-user communications and pre-briefing sessions for help desks, and begin measuring user experience metrics in real-time rather than retrospectively. Deliverable: UX scorecard day 1 to provide visibility into how successful the new technology has been adopted by users.

Phase 7
Transfer Ownership of Day 2 Operations

Implementing a managed service model, an ongoing governance structure for monitoring the health of the platform, cost optimization of the platform, and user satisfaction with the platform. Deliverable: Operations run book and ongoing engagement with managed services providers.

09 Why Execution Partner Selection Is as Important as Platform Selection

A framework alone does not guarantee success. Outcomes vary dramatically depending on execution capability.

Anunta's Azure Virtual Desktop Specialization from Microsoft and 10+ years as an Omnissa strategic partner enable true platform neutrality. Recommendations are driven by operational data, not vendor preference.

Most organizations migrating from Citrix still rely on vendors with a preferred platform bias. By contrast, Anunta's migration models, regional cost profiles, and delivery playbooks are based on real enterprise outcomes across North America, EMEA, APAC, and LATAM.

The combination of platform neutrality, proprietary tooling, and live delivery experience enables organizations to make decisions using complete operational and financial visibility.

10 Conclusion

This is not simply a technical platform selection exercise. It is a long-term financial and operational commitment with compounding impact over three to five years.

Organizations evaluating the decision as a feature comparison or licensing negotiation will pay materially higher costs in TCO, operational friction, and remediation.

A structured approach produces measurable advantages:

- Full visibility into cost categories
- Controlled phased migration with roll back governance
- Sustainable optimization by geography and workforce profile

Anunta's experience across 40+ enterprise migrations demonstrates these outcomes are achievable.

The decision window is limited. CIOs must decide whether to move forward with complete data or incomplete assumptions. This blueprint is designed to support that decision.

About Anunta

Anunta builds secure and compliant digital workspaces across private, public, and hybrid clouds for enterprises. Our comprehensive range of managed virtual desktop, managed endpoint & cloud services allow users to access applications and data securely. Our managed services are powered by our platforms, which leverage AI & Machine Learning to automate and optimize operations. We've been consistently featured in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Desktop as a Service. With over a decade of experience, we've successfully migrated **1 Million+** remote desktop users, boosting security, enhancing workforce productivity, and delivering superior end-user experiences.

For more information about Anunta, visit www.anunta.com

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