

CUSTOMER STORY

Relic Entertainment

game designers are working from home and their workstations stay put in the studio.



Part of SEGA's family of studios, Vancouver-based Relic Entertainment is an award-winning developer of rich, real-time strategy games like its flagship franchise, Company of Heroes. Other titles include Age of Empires, Dawn of War, and Homeworld. Founded in 1997, Relic Entertainment's legacy of innovation spans more than 20 years.

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FRANCOIS BOTHA
DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
RELIC ENTERTAINMENT

Challenges

- Support work from home, during and after the pandemic
- Create the culture and provide the tools for employees to build games they're proud of
- Protect intellectual property

Solutions

- Teradici Cloud Access Software (CAS) PCoIP Agent on office workstations, with NVIDIA Quadro graphics processing units (GPUs)
- Teradici CAS PCoIP® Client on employees' home computers—allowing encrypted pixels to stream between the home computer and workstation
- PCoIP Ultra display enhancements for optimized experience with 4K/UHD high frame rate content

Results

- Delivered great user experience for staff working from home
- Smooth video playout and sustained 60 fps performance across multiple monitors
- Continued meeting publisher milestones during pandemic lockdown
- Kept sensitive content secure because files never leave studio workstations
- Expanded talent pool to candidates living outside Vancouver studio area



“ With CAS, there’s no perceptible difference between working in the studio or at home. And we don’t have to worry about loss of intellectual property because files never leave the studio—only encrypted pixels travel over the network.

JAMES GREENMAN
PRINCIPAL SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR,
RELIC ENTERTAINMENT

Relic Entertainment has 280 employees—and counting. “Our culture is what makes us special, and part of the culture is giving our people the technology to build games they’re proud of and that people love to play,” says Heidi Eaves, Chief Operating Officer. “We want our people to be excited to come to work every day, solve problems, and tell stories.”

Relic’s artists and designers build genre-defining games using graphics-intensive applications like Adobe Creative Suite, Autodesk software, Zbrush, Visual Studio, Perforce, Incredibuild, and many others. They work on powerful Lenovo ThinkStation P510 and P520 workstations with NVIDIA Quadro P4000/P5000 GPUs that support a great application experience.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Relic allowed remote work on a limited basis. When an employee asked to work from home, Relic didn’t want to send home a workstation because of the performance challenges and security risks. Instead, the company decided to provide secure remote access to the studio workstation. Making it work would require responsive application performance, colour accuracy, distortion-free images, and full support for Wacom Cintiq Pro creative pen displays. “Teradici Cloud Access Software was the obvious choice,” says Francois Botha, Director of Technology Services. “CAS is a reliable and proven standard in the media entertainment industry, so it felt like a perfect fit.”

Deployment was as simple as installing CAS on the studio workstation and on the employee’s home device. The employee went right to work, the same day. “With CAS, there’s no perceptible difference between working in the studio or at home,” says James Greenman, who designed, implemented, and supports Relic’s work-from-home program. “And we don’t have to worry about loss of intellectual property because files never leave the studio—only encrypted pixels travel over the network.”

When pandemic lockdown orders were issued, the Teradici work-from-home solution saved the day. Before the studio closed, Relic installed CAS on all in-studio workstations. At home, employees can use any operating system (Mac, Windows, Linux) and any monitor size and resolution. “With a stable internet connection, latency for employees who live nearby is as low as 7 to 14 milliseconds,” says Botha. “With Teradici CAS, employees working from home can’t tell they’re not right in front of their workstations. It’s amazing.”

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Relic's flagship franchise, *Company of Heroes*

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HEIDI EAVES
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER,
RELIC ENTERTAINMENT

The transition to working from home went smoothly. For the first couple of weeks after employees went home to work, Relic focused on making sure employees had a comfortable office setup and good internet connection—and knew their jobs were safe. “Team members were reassured to know we already had the technology to work from home,” Eaves says. “Settling into a new way of working took less than a month.”

Teradici helped remove technology barriers for designers and artists to remain productive. Game developers experience the very high fidelity they need to test action sequences. “Playback with Teradici software is just how gamers will experience it on their PCs—up to 60 frames per second at 4K resolution,” Botha says. And for artists, the Wacom Cintiq Pro creative pen displays are as responsive as they are in the studio—even for an artist who works 75 miles away.

Now Relic can hire people anywhere in the country, a competitive advantage. “In a work-from-home world, Teradici software lets us hire the best people regardless of where they are,” says Eaves. Recently, when the best candidate happened to live 1,000 miles away, in Ontario, Canada, Relic didn’t hesitate to make an offer.

When the studio re-opens, most employees say they’d like to split their time between the studio and home. “Some people thrive working remotely, while others like the spontaneous collaboration that happens in an office setting—and less screen time,” Eaves says. “With Teradici software, our team members can work from anywhere to build games. We have a proven blueprint for remote work.”

Botha agrees. “The industry won’t return to the way it was, with everyone in the studio,” he says. “With CAS, we can adapt to new ways of working.”

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