

Hollands Kroon builds unique digital workplace

Citrix Workspace revolutionizes the workplace

2020 has forced many organizations to reexamine their flexible working policies. Hollands Kroon was not one of them.

In the Hollands Kroon region of the Netherlands, you will find a typical Dutch landscape complete with iconic windmills, flowers, and stunning coastline. You will also find one of the most progressive local government organizations in Europe, with an innovative approach to work. Employees are empowered to choose their hours, there are no fixed holidays, and certainly no fixed office.

It offers the local community all the usual services you can expect from the local government, but Hollands Kroon is the first municipality in the Netherlands to give citizens access to these vital services online and is doing things very differently. Work is measured by output and results, not hours spent. Employees work from home. As long as deadlines are met there are no problems and it is a model that other employers are clamoring to learn about and replicate.

“When people first hear of this approach, we are given some funny looks,” says Frank van Hoolwerff, ICT Advisor, Hollands Kroon, “but it works. Productivity is up, employee satisfaction is up, and all our citizen service commitments are met.”

Technology plays a critical role. Hollands Kroon wants all home working staff to be free to work from their device of choice, and their preferred operating system. Data security and government compliance are a given. The user experience for all applications and interfaces should be consumer-grade.

“We want employees that are self-starters, problem solvers and independent thinkers. Technology should not get in their way,” he states. “If we are encouraging staff to work any hours they choose, we must create an environment that requires minimal support. This kind of model needs a clear, simple digital workplace.”



Industry

Local government

Location

The Netherlands

Citrix products

- [Citrix Workspace](#)

Key Benefits

- Citrix Workspace provides a single point of access to all the apps and files required to focus on meaningful work
- Loaded with intelligent, practical features to help organize, guide and automate routine tasks, Citrix Workspace enables an entirely new way to work

Creating a richer user experience

Citrix Workspace creates a unified user experience for all Hollands Kroon employees. It delivers a streamlined workday for employees by organizing, guiding, and automating work in an intelligent and personal way, transforming the employee experience. Rather than logging into two separate environments – Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops and Microsoft 365, users now have a single sign-on (SSO) experience. Through SSO, users access a range of everyday tools, from legacy applications to third-party Software as a Service (SaaS) apps. Citrix Workspace can talk to the system-of-record applications behind the scenes, presenting Hollands Kroon users with simplified actions to complete successfully with the click of a button. In addition, notifications keep users informed with notable updates and team communications. For example, a user no longer has to navigate to a separate application to approve an expense report. They can do it directly from within the Citrix Workspace, simply scrolling within their intelligent feed to the relevant card and approving the request.

“We looked at other options, but nothing came close to the maturity and the features of the Citrix environment,” Van Hoolwerff says. “This is more than a VDI solution. No other supplier could create an environment as rich as Citrix Workspace. It gives us custom gateways to secure applications, all kept in our environment.”

Citrix Workspace provides a platform for microapps that streamlines functionality, including out-of-the-box integrations with apps from SAP, Microsoft, Google G-Suite, Salesforce, Workday, Atlassian, Zendesk, Tableau, and ServiceNow. In addition, more than 100 pre-configured microapps help automate common business tasks, deliver essential information to an employee’s personalized work feed, and build personalized workflows for individual employees to help them focus.

In keeping with its flexible work culture, Hollands Kroon is using microapps to give IT administrators and users self-service access to applications when they need them. A Topdesk microapp allows users to log their own IT tickets, freeing up the IT service desk to focus on fixing issues. While an onboarding microapp streamlines and automates the creation of new IT accounts when a new starter joins.

“Microapps enable us to automate processes while keeping an audited permissions record. The workflows we’re able to create are saving us time and resource,” Van Hoolwerff says. “From a management perspective, Citrix provides both security and monitoring. We can easily see what the user sees, make adjustments or deal with issues before they become problems.” The One App, One Click solution was designed and implemented alongside [RawWorks](#), a Citrix partner in the Netherlands.

“We would not have been able to launch successfully without RawWorks,” says Van Hoolwerff. “This was a new playing field for us, completely unlike our legacy environment, and RawWorks’ expertise was crucial, particularly in making the application experience simple and presentable for users.”

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Frank van Hoolwerff
ICT Advisor
Hollands Kroon

Empowering a new approach to flexible working

The result is a workforce that is more productive, more committed and more energized. For the IT service desk, the ability for employees to self-serve using microapps has a noticeable impact. With the Topdesk microapp, employees are logging three times more tickets themselves, freeing up the IT team to focus on more strategic IT issues. And the time spent setting up accounts for new starters is reduced from up to six hours to just 30 minutes per week with the onboarding microapp.

Eighty percent of Hollands Kroon employees can now work from anywhere. Van Hoolwerff says the majority of staff have quickly taken to the new approach, others have needed more support through the change, which is inevitable with a new working new culture.

The organization saves a huge amount on physical office space. It continues to use a redesigned, smart office, but this tends to be for meetings, presentations and discussions where face to face engagement is preferred. Tasks and projects are overwhelmingly instigated, managed and completed online, through the collaboration of dispersed teams.

“Everything employees need to do their work is now accessed through a single portal, our Citrix environment,” he explains. “The Workspace app creates a single point of entry to all data, all applications. It’s allowing staff to be more engaged.”

Hollands Kroon continues to deliver a stellar service across the services that matter most to citizens: from parking permits to playground maintenance, driving licenses to street lighting.

Driving ongoing improvements to the digital workspace

To support this workplace transformation the municipality moved its self-managed IT data center model to Microsoft Azure and the engagement with Citrix reflects a longer-term commitment to cloud and as-a-Service commercial models.

“We’re transitioning much of our workload to Microsoft Azure, so we needed a solution that is close to our data. Our data is in Microsoft Azure and Citrix Cloud is in Microsoft Azure,” explains Van Hoolwerff. “With Citrix and Microsoft working together, the data transfer is so fast. The latency on our applications is practically zero.”

The success of Hollands Kroon did not happen overnight. Van Hoolwerff says the project is ongoing. The task of engaging employees in new work styles is ongoing; the Citrix Workspace will continue to evolve.

“We’re looking at integrating the on- and offboarding processes, connecting HR and payroll in a fully compliant workflow. Automation is the goal,” he says. “These are unique times for many organizations. We all need to adapt. I believe we’re in a good place. Our workplace strategy means we’re more prepared, more flexible, than most.”

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