



Success story

TDK-Micronas

Industry

- Semiconductors

Solutions

- OpenText™ Exceed™ TurboX

Results



Seamlessly transitioned to home working retaining performance and security



Able to continue innovation throughout pandemic to meet project schedules



Extended the use of OpenText Exceed TurboX to replace remaining Linux workstations



High level of confidence in resilient relationship with OpenText



Semiconductor developer successfully adapts to the 'new normal' with high-performance, secure remote access

TDK-Micronas transitions to remote working, maintaining productivity, security, meeting development schedules with OpenText Exceed TurboX

"As a forward thinking and innovative business, our decision to implement the solution [OpenText Exceed TurboX] a number of years ago has only been reinforced by the events of 2020."

Paul Blenderman

Manager, Servers and Infrastructure
TDK-Micronas



When stringent lockdown measures were introduced to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, TDK-Micronas design engineers had to quickly adapt to ensure they could continue to work safely, efficiently, effectively and securely.

The firm, part of TDK's Sensor Systems Business Company, develops and manufactures sensor solutions and embedded motor controllers for automotive and industrial applications. Products include Hall switches, linear sensors, 3D direct-angle sensors and current sensors. To date, under the brand Micronas, the firm has shipped over five billion Hall sensors.

Paul Blenderman, Manager, Servers and Infrastructure at TDK-Micronas explained the immediate challenge faced by the firm, ***"We have design engineers located at a number of locations globally, but with a large concentration at our operational headquarters in Freiburg im Breisgau in Germany. When the COVID-19 crisis hit Germany, many of our layout engineers that live in the Grand Est region of France, were unable to commute due to the lockdown restrictions. Many others needed to work from home wherever possible too, and so we had to quickly adapt, which we were able to thanks to secure remote access provided by OpenText Exceed TurboX."***

Preparing for the transition to home working

The OpenText Exceed TurboX solution was deployed a number of years ago at the company's data centers, providing server-side application execution and front-end rendering, delivered over a network connection. This enabled the designers and layout specialists to effectively work remotely.

"We've been benefitting from faster execution, with far less data being transmitted over our wide area network since implementing OpenText Exceed TurboX," said Blenderman, ***"We were able to replace Linux workstations with Microsoft® Windows® PCs, which are used for office tools as well. Our R&D engineers have been able***

to work quicker, not suffering from network latency in the way they used to, as data securely remains on our central servers. When COVID-19 hit, this was the perfect foundation for them to transition to home working."

Many of the 1,000 or so staff at TDK-Micronas are involved in the design of integrated circuits, which is a time-consuming and resource-intensive process. Its engineers use a variety of powerful software tools, including graphically intensive interactive layout tools, such as Custom Compiler from Synopsys, to help design and test its products.

"When governments introduced travel restrictions and other lockdown guidelines, our initial concern was that we would be unable to continue our development efforts," added Blenderman, ***"Our ability to meet R&D timescales would be severely impacted, or even cease. This in turn would cause delays in product releases, resulting in a very hard financial impact on the business, as well as unhappy customers."***

Many users had laptops that were already setup for remote working, such as from home. However, design engineer desktops had to be secured as they would not ordinarily be used away from the secure office environment. Hard disks were encrypted and virtual private network (VPN) access was configured.

"Once successfully tested, engineers were able to take their desktop computers home, along with all their peripherals, including high resolution, large monitors," explained Blenderman, ***"They were then able to continue using OpenText Exceed TurboX to access their design sessions on our secure servers, safe in the knowledge that data would never leave our data centers. There was no reduction in performance, with some reporting that performance actually improved. We had faith that Exceed TurboX would be able to handle the challenge and we were correct."***

"Throughout this challenging period, we have been impressed not only with the capabilities of OpenText Exceed TurboX, but also with OpenText support, consultancy and account management."

Paul Blenderman
Manager, Servers and Infrastructure
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Extending the benefits

There were a small number of developers that had resisted change and were still using Linux workstations. Discussions had been ongoing to move them to Exceed TurboX, within a Windows desktop environment, so that they too could benefit from improved performance, session suspend and resume functionality, screen sharing for collaboration and support purposes and central administration for configuration.

“The pandemic and the need to work from home accelerated this move for around 35 developers,” stated Blenderman, ***“As well as performance improvements, they now benefit from greater bandwidth availability, more memory and CPU and since their move to Exceed TurboX they are now reporting that they are happy, settled and satisfied with the new setup.”***

Overall user feedback has shown how well the secure and remote access is working, despite being physically distant from the data center. Users have been enthusiastic and positive, reporting that they can work just as well as in the office.

“Throughout the lockdown, there have been no issues with OpenText Exceed TurboX working seamlessly, allowing our personnel to focus on their roles,” said Blenderman, ***“As a forward thinking and innovative business, our decision to implement the solution a number of years ago has only been reinforced by the events of 2020.”***

Whilst technology cannot solve the social side of colleagues working in the same physical location, the screen sharing capabilities have gone some way to ease the strain.

“Collaboration is key to us being able to continue serving our customers,” added Blenderman, ***“Screen sharing within Exceed TurboX allows users at different locations to see what each other is working on, which also makes supporting them easier too.”***

Our support staff can see exactly what the user is seeing when diagnosing any issues that may arise.”

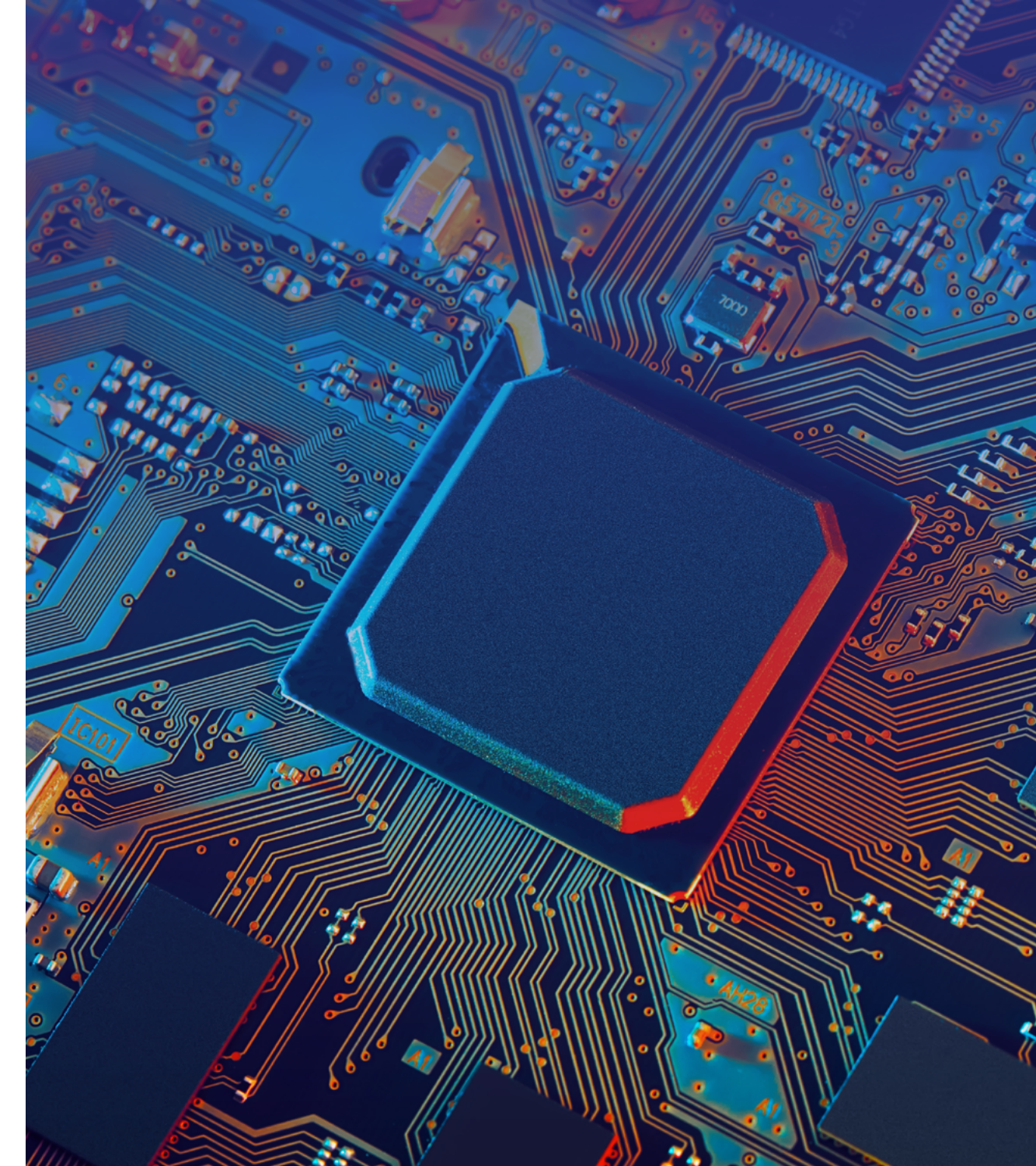
Ready to face future challenges

Some engineers have now returned to working in the office, perhaps part-time, to use equipment that cannot be replicated at home, such as testing labs, or because it is more productive for them personally. However, with a second wave of COVID-19 impacting many countries, TDK-Micronas now has the confidence that should they need all engineers to once again work from home, due to travel or other restrictions, they are well prepared and know they can continue to innovate by using the secure remote access provided by OpenText Exceed TurboX.

“Having proven that Exceed TurboX can support a new way of working, we were more than happy to recommend it to another TDK subsidiary, ICsense in Belgium,” stated Blenderman, ***“The cost implications if engineers are unable to work from home would be dramatic for businesses like ours and ICsense. Management would have to find a way to bring people into the office, making expensive and disruptive adaptations in order to do so safely.”***

Hundreds of its engineers continue to work effectively from remote locations and the company is confident, that this will likely continue, even after the threat of COVID-19 has diminished.

“Throughout this challenging period, we have been impressed not only with the capabilities of OpenText Exceed TurboX, but also with OpenText support, consultancy and account management,” concluded Blenderman, ***“We are very happy with both the solution and the relationship we have built up. The quality and level of support has not diminished and has remained resilient throughout these tough times. We certainly do not receive the same level of service with other vendors as we do with OpenText.”***



About OpenText

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