

Powering Atomic Cartoons to create from anywhere

Enabling a leading animation studio (1000+ employees) to work remotely without missing a deadline



Award-winning Atomic Cartoons, a Thunderbird Entertainment company, is a full-service animation studio in Vancouver's busy Animation District. Atomic Cartoons creates, produces, and finances animation for distribution across multiple channels. Atomic Cartoons is an artist-driven studio that includes Canada's most creative animators, directors, and producers. Adept at multiple genres and animation styles, Atomic Cartoons is recognized internationally as one of the leading animation studios in North America.



INDUSTRY:
Media & Entertainment



COUNTRY:
Canada / United States

“Before Teradici came in, I can only imagine we only had a few dozen people working remotely. Now it's pretty much everybody.”

Robert Crowther,
IT Manager



World Class Partners

Netflix, Nickelodeon,
Disney+

1999

Atomic Cartoons founded

3 Animation Facilities

Vancouver, Ottawa,
Burbank

Objectives

- Coordinate 1000+ employees in Vancouver, Ottawa, and Los Angeles, including remote employees
- Remove the need to ship physical computer towers for employees
- Hit strict production deadlines during remote work transitions

Approach

- Implement HP Anyware (formerly Teradici CAS) and moving to rack-mounted workstations for proper power, cooling, and safeguarding
- Provide artists with PCoIP Zero Clients (10ZiG, LG) to connect to on-premises workstations

Business Outcomes

- Communication between internal teams is easier and more convenient
- Studio clients were confident because they already trusted the security and reputation of HP Teradici solutions in the M&E industry
- Accelerated the transition of all 1000+ employees from office to home, shortening time from 2 years to 1 week during the pandemic



“Trying to maintain the same user experience that the artists would have in the studio when they’re home working remotely was extremely important and Teradici allowed us to do that. User experience is at the top of the list for Atomic Cartoons.”

Tim Llewellyn
DFX Supervisor

“By having the flexibility with Teradici means that we don’t have to worry about a piece of software not fitting in with the solution that we want to use”

Robert Crowther,
IT Manager

Objectives

Minimal downtime disruption and improved IT security

When you and your team need to work on graphics-intensive and high bandwidth projects from two offices on opposite sides of the country, collaboration can be challenging enough. Add to that trying to do the same work from your less powerful or secure home computers or on the road.

Atomic Cartoons, an award-winning animation shop in Vancouver, Ottawa and Los Angeles, wanted to centralize their computing to reduce employee travel in cold and snowy conditions, to make collaborating and working with remote teams more efficient. Their solution also needed to be security compliant so studios could trust that data wouldn’t be intercepted when employees worked off-premises. And it was also critical that the remote access solution work with the complex hardware and software the animation teams need to produce high-quality work.

Before the pandemic hit, Atomic’s IT team was testing Teradici CAS (now HP Anyware) as a possible solution to increase efficiency for remote freelancers and workers. As the pandemic progressed, Atomic’s IT team knew they needed to onboard most of their staff with this solution to transition to working from home quickly with minimal downtime.

Atomic’s previous remote working strategy would have taken months or even years to implement to all 1000 staff (and counting). This kind of downtime would mean missing their critical production deadlines, and the studios would find other animation houses to work with instead.

Because they had already been testing the Teradici solution when Atomic Cartoons staff were forced to work from home in March 2020, the downtime during the transition was minimal. The 13 person IT team was able to onboard everyone in less than two weeks. It would have been near impossible for a company like Atomic Cartoons to continue creating its award-winning shows without the help of an integration like HP Anyware. Because it was easy and quick to implement across a large team, Atomic never missed a single deadline or upset any customers during the transition and since.

Software

- HP Anyware
- Anyware Manager

Hardware

- 1:1 connections to HP Z4 and other rack-mounted workstations
- PCoIP Zero Clients
- NVIDIA GPUs
- Wacom pen displays and tablets

Approach

1:1 connections to remote workstations via HP Anyware

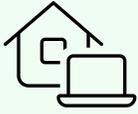
In addition to being easy-to-use and quick-to-implement, the security requirements were also high. CAS was the perfect solution because it uses a secure PCoIP remote display protocol that connects more than 15 million endpoints around the globe. No data or business information leaves the safety of the corporate network, making it ideal for the data and files used by the Atomic animators. When it came to security reassurances, studios were good after Atomic told them that they're using Teradici, since Teradici is so well-known in the Media & Entertainment industry.

The artist's computing set-ups were quite detailed and not something a standard remote desktop application could support. With HP Anyware, Atomic enabled each animator to work remotely from home with a PCoIP Zero Client, so they could work with the following tools and applications:

- Wacom pen displays and tablets
 - Cintiq 22 HD
 - Cintiq 24 Pro (2D animation)
 - Intuos (3D animation, compositing, animation)
- Two monitors
- 3D applications, including Autodesk Maya, Substance Painter, Substance Designer, Pixar RenderMan, UVLayout

The HP Anyware implementation for Atomic Cartoons also included:

- Creating 1:1 connections to HP Z4, Dell Precision, or PowerEdge rack-mounted workstations (equipped with GPUs: NVIDIA RTX Quadro 4000, NVIDIA Quadro P4000, K4200, 1060 different GPUs for different users)
- Implementing shared machines sometimes for Linux or specific Windows applications
- Using Anyware Manager, with multi-admin features, G Suite with SAML (Security Assertion Markup Language)
- Installing Anyware Manager as-a-service, managed by HP Teradici
- Adding everyone to Anyware, sync it with Active Directory, and assign workstations through Anyware Manager
- Using non-GPU Anyware enterprise license for Atomic's parent company, Thunderbird Entertainment, who didn't need graphics-intensive applications or a powerful GPU



Allowed 1000+ staff to work remotely



87% of Atomic staff want to keep a hybrid working model

Business Outcomes

Improved onboarding time and flexibility in working options

Using HP Anyware has opened new opportunities for Atomic Cartoons. Some of these include:

- Freelancers not needing to download assets to personal machines because they are accessing a studio desktop instead
- IT teams can use PCoIP Zero Clients to limit what employees can install on their computers
- Teams are now free to move around the city (or from the city) and not lose productivity or deal with latency issues

This solution was put to the ultimate test when an Atomic staff member visited South Korea to visit family while continuing to work for the studio. They were able to seamlessly connect to their Vancouver-based workstations the whole time without latency or security issues. They said it was much more efficient than connecting via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) or using a Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP).

Atomic is excited about what enabling HP Anyware on their network means for the future. They can now hire talent from anywhere in the world who can connect to on-premises, rack-mounted workstations. They also plan to experiment with public cloud remote workstations on a per-project basis.

Implementing HP Anyware couldn't have come at a better time as they had a dramatic increase in new projects and workloads during the pandemic. Because Atomic's IT Team could onboard such a large workforce so quickly, there was a minimal interruption in work schedules. They never missed a deadline or upset clients due to communication issues or project delays.

With HP Anyware, Atomic employees have the personal freedom to move out of the big cities if they wish, without risking any loss of productivity or collaboration. This track record of growth, business success, and increased productivity while allowing their over 1000+ staff to work remotely when needed is something Atomic plans to keep doing for the future.

Learn more at hp.com/anyware

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