

Baltbet equips its retail chain with 4,200 new devices



HP delivers an integrated solution for a federal-scale betting chain

Industry
Betting Chain

Objective

Equip betting shop locations with reliable and quality computer hardware capable of 24/7 operation

Approach

Contract for delivery of mini-desktops with customised configurations and settings, displays and peripherals, covered by extended HP Care Pack 3/3/3 warranty

IT matters

- Integrated solution geared toward customer needs
- Extended HP CarePack 3/3/3 warranty relieves the customer's IT department of repair and maintenance duties

Business matters

- HP flexible pricing policy enabled the customer to stay within budget and receive a ready-made solution without sacrificing quality or performance
- HP handled the assembly and configuration of desktop PCs in Europe, fast delivery to Russia, certification and customs clearance, and also provided assistance with logistics in the Russian regions



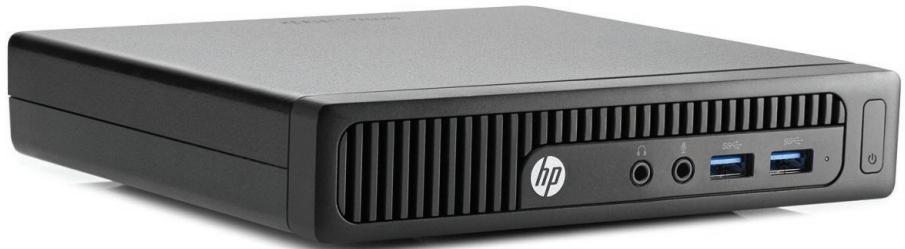
“To upgrade workstations at our betting shops, we needed an integrated solution consisting of 4,200 desktop PCs with custom BIOS settings and configuration, along with displays, keyboards and mouse controllers as well as on-demand warranty service for all this hardware.”

– Evgeny Zhebrik, head of IT systems operation and maintenance, Santorin

Baltbet betting shop locations receive 4,200 HP devices with custom configuration and extended HP Care Packs

Santorin — the company operating under the Baltbet brand, which owns 640 betting shops in Russia and overseas — needed 4,200 client workstations for its retail locations. Considering the high requirements for quality and warranty obligations, the company took a no-nonsense approach to choosing a vendor. The choice fell on HP, which offered unique delivery terms, the possibility of hardware customisation by the manufacturer, and an extended warranty that enables the customer to make the maximum use of hardware while avoiding contingency costs in the future.





Challenge

Place your bets

Baltbet is an international betting chain and one of the industry leaders by the number of betting shops across Russia. Santorin — the company operating under the Baltbet brand, was established in 2003 and currently operates over 640 betting shop locations in Russia, Serbia, Belarus and Tajikistan. Baltbet betting shops are open around the clock and accept bets on all major international sporting events, including over 1,000 football and 100 hockey championships, more than 300 basketball tournaments as well as many notable tennis, volleyball, boxing and other competitions.

Betting shops are equipped according to the latest standards and allow customers to make bets and monitor results in a comfortable and safe setting. The shops have computer terminals where customers can view lists of competitions, and make bets on any of the thousands of events available in the system.

Just like any other business that handles customers' money, a betting shop has special requirements for equipment installed on its premises. Hardware used at betting shops has to be balanced, reliable and of good quality, come with protection against theft and vandalism, and be sufficiently powerful and durable. This is exactly why choosing a vendor of computer terminals is a challenging task, especially when it comes to equipping hundreds of betting shop locations all over Russia.

In late 2015, the company yet again needed to buy computers and displays for its betting shops. HP helped to find the optimal solution.

"We value our reputation, which is why we expect all hardware at betting shops to run without a hitch, and any malfunctions to be rectified promptly to avoid lengthy downtime of client workstations, no matter the distance between our betting shops and the vendor's warehouses or dealerships," says Evgeny Zhebrik, head of IT systems operation and maintenance, Santorin. He adds: "We needed an integrated solution for our betting shop locations, which was not limited to a delivery of 4,200 computers and displays with customised configurations and settings. We required a reliable and prompt warranty service for all of this hardware throughout its service life."

Santorin IT professionals began by formulating a number of requirements for hardware to be procured.

Zhebrik continues: "Since processor units are mounted inside workstations, we needed desktop computers in compact cases with wall-mounted connectors. They had to be sturdy and protected against tampering while also delivering a sufficient level of performance. We also needed to modify BIOS and the configuration of processor units to eliminate unnecessary functionality such as Bluetooth® wireless modules at the assembly stage. In addition to processor units, we needed displays that could be reliably mounted to the wall with a minimal gap."

The customer put forward special requirements for the potential supplier of hardware: the vendor had to be able to configure in a factory setting, assemble, import into Russia and certify 4,200 sets of computers and displays, offer extended warranty, and eventually provide servicing for the entire fleet of devices distributed across the territory where Baltbet operates.

Solution

Making the right choice

Choosing the vendor of such a large shipment of computer hardware is no simple task. Some of the Baltbet betting shops are open 24/7, while others serve customers from early morning until late at night, seven days a week. Hence the key requirements for the hardware: quality and reliability, since failures would entail major financial and reputational losses.

Looking for the optimal configuration for client workstations, engineers at the IT Department of Santorin examined all the fine points of user interaction with the betting system and came up with a list of computer configuration requirements.

A public tender was then announced to select the vendor. Several major vendors and distributors submitted their bids with offers of hardware models, delivery and warranty service terms. Not all were up to the task of delivering such a large shipment of hardware within the time frame specified.

“We received several bids, but few of the bidders were prepared to deliver the requisite quantity of hardware within the time frame we specified,” says Zhebrik, adding: “HP offered its HP 260 G1 Desktop Mini PC and HP ProDisplay P242va Monitor, which satisfied all of our requirements. These processor units are very compact at just 34mm thick, virtually silent and also allow different installation options, including bolting them to the wall. These models were assembled in Europe, which ensured a faster delivery time frame compared to delivery from China. HP was also able to promptly incorporate our order into its production plans, manufacture and deliver the entire shipment in just one month.

Most importantly, HP made a unique offer that includes hardware configuration at the factory and servicing under an extended Care Pack 3/3/3 three-year warranty.”

Under the contract terms, the configuration of processor units was modified at the assembly stage by removing the Bluetooth wireless modules installed in them by default, and installing the modified BIOS prepared by Santorin experts.

Benefits

A long-term win-win relationship

“A contract for a one-time purchase of over 4,000 desktop PCs and displays is a big deal for our company,” Evgeny continues, adding: “These computers are expected to operate in a very demanding mode at betting shops all over Russia, which is why it was very important for us to choose the right vendor. Essentially, we were looking not so much for a hardware vendor as for a reliable partner capable for ensuring uninterrupted operation of hardware throughout its service life.

“In conducting the tender, we established three primary requirements in addition to the technical specs: first, the quality of hardware; second, the pricing policy; and third; reliable servicing and availability of customisation in a factory setting,” says Evgeny. “HP offered best-in-class prices and, more importantly, warranty service terms that enable us to use the equipment to its full potential without fearing that it will break down before the warranty expires. In working with HP under this contract, we have found a partner seeking a long-term win-win relationship. HP managers did their best to help us come up with a configuration that is just right for our needs and did their best to have the particulars of the contract and logistics agreed upon in next to no time.”

The parties began negotiating the contract in December 2015, then in February 2016 the vendor started installing mini-desktops and displays at betting shop locations. All of the hardware was up and running by June. Under this contract, HP handled not just the customisation, assembly and certification of hardware, but also the logistics customs clearance and delivery of hardware to central warehouses in major cities followed by distribution to the regions.

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HP 260 G1 Desktop Mini PC
- HP ProDisplay P242va Monitor

HP services

- Factory Configuration Services
- Deployment Services
- HP Care Pack 3/3/3

Under the contract, Santorin has received an extended HP Care Pack 3/3/3 warranty that includes three years of warranty for hardware and components and onsite visits by certified engineers.

“Currently, six months after the hardware entered service, we have detected no failures or flaws of workmanship in the shipment of computers delivered by HP,” says Evgeny, adding: “The vendor’s extended warranty will help us avoid downtime of client workstations, which is extremely important for us in terms of business and reputation.”

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Santorin has found a trustworthy partner in HP that assumed full responsibility for hardware delivery and servicing, allowing the customer’s IT team to focus on more important business tasks, including continued improvements to client workstations.

In 2017, Santorin plans to implement new interactive and marketing services for customers with a view to bringing the functionality and comfort of client workstations at betting shops up to international standards. This will most likely require additional hardware purchases from HP.

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