



## Customer Story

Healthcare Industry

# Brant County Health Unit Enables Access to Clinical Application with Ericom, Enhancing Staff Productivity & Significantly Lowering TCO



“As result of deploying PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView...we can now get rid of the redundant desktops and furniture in each two-person office and use it for other purposes within the Health Unit. Instead of two of everything, we just need one!”

**Rob Bannerman**  
Computer System Administrator  
Brant County Health Unit

### BACKGROUND

The Brant County Health Unit is an accredited community health agency providing a wide range of public health programs and services to over 100,000 people in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. The Health Unit's main focus is to promote and protect health and prevent disease, illness and injury. Its activities are guided by a Board of Health.

### CUSTOMER

Brant County Health Unit

### INDUSTRY

Healthcare

### CHALLENGE

To provide remote employees with reliable, secure access to the Windows Terminal Server based Ministry of Health's Immunization application.

### SOLUTION

Ericom® PowerTerm® WebConnect RemoteView

### RESULT

PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView enables access to Windows Terminal Server applications from laptops running SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktops, for improved application functionality and user productivity.

### BENEFITS

- Reduces the need for additional hardware by optimizing existing resources
- Improves application performance
- Centralized management simplifies deployment and maintenance
- Ericom's solution is cost-effective and reasonably priced
- Improves user productivity by enabling users to automatically resume their session from point of interruption
- Outstanding technical support

### IT ENVIRONMENT

**Application:** Ministry of Health's immunization application, Microsoft® Office

**Server side:** IBM Windows Storage Server 2003 R2

**Client side:** Microsoft® Windows® XP Pro, SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktops, and thin clients

**Hardware:** IBM p4

**Network:** Standard Ethernet between client and server

# “PowerTerm WebConnect R improves user productivity

One of the Health Unit’s responsibilities is to provide community members with immunizations for all vaccine preventable diseases. Public Health employees record the data using an application developed by the Ontario Ministry of Health. According to Rob Bannerman, the Health Unit’s Computer System Administrator, problems arose when the organization started to update its aging hardware and deploy the Ministry of Health’s application on Terminal Servers. “The immunization program worked fine on our aging desktops,” recalled Rob, “but when we began replacing these desktops with laptops, accessing the application became problematic. It was like playing Russian roulette. The program worked for a few hours and then suddenly froze, corrupting the database for everyone.”

Until a permanent solution could be found, the Health Unit prohibited workers from accessing the Immunization application from their laptops. This meant maintenance of extra hardware. Two workers occupy each office, and each worker performed daily activities using his/her own laptop. In addition, for the purpose of accessing the Immunization application, both workers also shared one full-size desktop. “That’s a lot of hardware, furniture, and space that we could have used elsewhere,” explained Rob.

## FINDING ERICOM — THE ALTERNATIVE TO CITRIX

While the Immunization application performed satisfactorily on Terminal Servers, it didn’t provide the Health Unit with the control needed to manage users’ remote access, as well as passwords and security. Rob looked at various solutions, before discovering Ericom. “As far as I was aware, if you needed Terminal Services, you went to Microsoft. But, I didn’t realize that there was a viable alternative to Citrix for secure and remote access to Terminal Servers,” explained Rob. “I had used Citrix in the past, but as a government agency, we couldn’t afford the time, overhead or budget required to make the Citrix solution work properly.”

Rob first learned about Ericom at Novell’s annual BrainShare technical conference in Salt Lake City. “I went to a Terminal Services presentation, and Ericom’s name came up as an alternative to Citrix for an organization of our size, management structure and price range. When I asked other Novell presenters whom they would recommend for Terminal Services, Ericom’s name kept coming up.”

Upon his return from BrainShare, Rob contacted Ericom: “Ericom’s technical support was great,” said Rob. “When I called with questions regarding the demo, I actually spoke with a live person who knew what they were doing. I don’t think I was on the phone for very long with

Ericom Support before all my questions were answered.”

In addition to top-notch technical support, Ericom’s easy deployment was a major factor in choosing PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView. “My main requirement was ease of use for both the administrator and the end-user,” said Rob. “We don’t have time for complicated set-ups and updates. It was great to be able to get PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView set up and running in a short amount of time.”

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Computer System Administrator  
Brant County Health Unit

The Health Unit uses Novell® eDirectory™ to manage user name and password information. Users log onto PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView and their login credentials automatically get passed on to Microsoft® Windows for automatic login. This means users only have to remember one password for logging into the system. “This is great for us on the administration side. It means we don’t have to manage separate passwords or user names. PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView automatically identifies user definitions from eDirectory, so when an employee’s password changes in one place, it automatically gets updated in PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView’s database, and users can just carry on working without interruption,” said Rob.



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### IMPROVING FUNCTIONALITY & REDUCING OPERATIONAL COSTS

PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView also helped the Health Unit improve the functionality of the Ministry's older applications. "The applications are very sensitive to network drops. If another CPU-taxing program, such as the virus scan utility, started its cycle, the Immunization application would either freeze or corrupt the database. With PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView, this is no longer an issue," said Rob. "If a network disconnect between the client and server occurs, PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView picks up and carries on from where the connection went down. This has saved us hours of work, not to mention being a great relief to our staff. They no longer have to worry about losing their work or data, plus it saves them from repeating the login process."

"As result of deploying PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView, staff members can use their laptops for everything — Office applications, Internet, email, as well as for accessing the older applications residing on the Terminal Server," said Rob. "We can now get rid of the redundant desktops and furniture in each two-person office and use it for other purposes within the Health Unit. Instead of two of everything, we just need one!"

According to Justin Steinman, Director of Marketing for Linux and Open Platform Solutions at Novell, "SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop is proving itself to be an affordable and easy-to-manage component of an efficient IT operation. The addition of a top product like PowerTerm WebConnect to the customer solution simply increases



that value. We are pleased that Brant County Health Unit is experiencing significant savings running these Novell and Ericom technologies together."

### MOVING AHEAD WITH POWERTERM WEBCONNECT REMOTEVIEW

"Our customers seek reliable solutions that extend the value of their IT resources and infrastructure," said Fred Read, President and CTO of FinniTech Technical Services, an Ericom business partner. FinniTech found Ericom's PowerTerm WebConnect as the perfect complement to Brant County's SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop implementation. "As a solid Server Based Computing solution, PowerTerm WebConnect provides robust features and centralized management tools that streamline IT efficiencies in the most cost-effective manner."

Besides implementing PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView for local

access, plans are underway to deploy PowerTerm WebConnect so that offsite staff can connect to the Immunization application. "Field workers will no longer have to write down the information and bring it back to the office to input into the system," said Rob. With PowerTerm WebConnect, users will be able to access the applications remotely from wherever they are — schools or civic centers — whenever they need it. We've already tested it, and it works quite well."

## ERICOM – ACCESS DONE RIGHT

Ericom® Software is a leading provider of Application Access and Virtualization Solutions. Since 1993, Ericom has been helping users access enterprise mission-critical applications, enabling access to applications running on a broad range of Microsoft® Windows® Terminal Servers, legacy hosts and other systems, and providing concrete business value by helping organizations realize the benefits of their IT investments. With offices in the United States, United Kingdom, EMEA, India and China, Ericom also has an extensive network of distributors and partners throughout North America, Europe, Asia and the Far East. Our expanding customer base is more than 30 thousand strong, with over 7 million installations.



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