



How to Decrease IT Support Calls and Reduce Software Licensing Fees

Summary

IT support staffs challenged to improve service delivery quality while reducing costs cite receiving redundant, preventable calls as one of their top issues. Interrupted workflow deteriorates productivity on both ends of the request. This white paper discusses the role that file-viewing software can play in reducing IT support calls, improving productivity, reducing software licensing fees and enhancing network security; and it also provides criteria for selecting file-viewing software.



It's no surprise that IT groups hard at work in support of their companies' strategic objectives cite being overrun by simple, preventable support calls as one of their most onerous issues. And it's a given that interrupted workflow deteriorates productivity.

Each unexpected workflow snafu also has productivity consequences for the user submitting a request for support. Users who commandeer IT support's time do so because their workflow has been interrupted by some IT-related glitch.

This double whammy causes frustration on both ends of the productivity equation. Often, annoying support calls related to simple, repetitive issues can be avoided completely by using the right software.

One of the most challenging yet easily solved issues frequently mentioned is that of inquiries from users who can't open files—email attachments or other documents for which the user doesn't have the appropriate software installed. While almost everyone in an organization may need certain common software applications like email and word processing, it is cost-prohibitive to equip all employees with every software application they may need as they encounter different files.

As a strategy for containing software licensing fees, particularly for large companies and government entities, IT creates a desktop image that contains only the applications they believe a new employee needs, in addition to essentials such as the operating system, email client, etc. However, this doesn't fulfill all the file-viewing and productivity needs of employees. Vendors or business associates may send files from alternative office suites or other productivity software packages that the desktop image does not support.

It is this situation that causes the problem: Someone needs to view an email attachment or file and doesn't have the proper software. That's when workflow is interrupted, productivity suffers and IT support receives a (preventable) call to devise a workaround.



Increased productivity with reduced workflow interruption, IT support costs and software licensing fees

And so a cycle of frustration begins: workflow interruption, productivity decline and frustration on both ends of the support call. *This is a perfect example of where the right software—a desktop file-viewing utility—can eliminate an entire class of redundant IT support issues.*

File-viewing software eliminates support calls of this nature *without* sacrificing the savings derived from limiting licensing fees. It's a very cost-effective way to control and even reduce desktop image costs. It also helps manage budgets by enabling IT to delay certain upgrades without sacrificing productivity. In addition, the software enables users to review office files remotely without requiring the application. Add the soft savings in productivity when users can quickly access information, and the ROI can be significant *and* immediate.

A typical organization that takes advantage of file-viewing technology can save hundreds of dollars per desktop image by not having to buy certain software applications. Multiply the savings by all employees across the enterprise, and the savings are enormous. *Using conservative estimates, an organization with 1,000 employees could save well over \$250,000 in software licensing costs.*

Tighter security

Just as important, if not more pressing for IT departments, is network security. File-viewing software supports network protection by acting as an additional line of defense against macro viruses. It reduces vulnerability to viruses and the associated expenses of server shutdowns, lost productivity, and damaged or destroyed data.

By enabling users to view files without actually opening them, this software eliminates the threat of a malicious virus penetrating the desktop and infiltrating the enterprise. Users can view, copy and print email attachments and native documents without worrying about infected files. View-only ability also prevents unauthorized users from inadvertently or intentionally modifying the content of a file.



Criteria for selecting comprehensive file-viewing software

The following guidelines are designed to help you select the right software.

#1: Application file versions and file types

The overriding criterion when selecting a file-viewing utility is its ability to handle a broad range of application file versions and file types. The broader the support of various file formats and types, the less chance of encountering a file that cannot be opened.

Ask:

- What formats and software applications does the software support?
- Does it quickly open email attachments and files?
- Can it enable users to view files downloaded from the web regardless of format—text, spreadsheet, graphic, database, presentation, compressed files, html?
- Can it overcome Mac and PC incompatibilities?
- Does it integrate with major email programs, desktops and Internet browsers—Microsoft Outlook, Windows Explorer, Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox?

#2: Ease of deployment

File viewing should make IT's job easier, starting with installation.

Ask:

- How long does enterprise-wide installation take?
- Does installation require IT resources?
- Is any user training required?

#3: Ease of use, functionality

The primary goal of file-viewing software is to make it easy for users to find information faster. Instead of sifting through files based on file name and opening one only to find that it's the wrong file, the software should allow the user to browse through directories to locate the right file, regardless of format. In many organizations, more than 75% of the information is unstructured content that resides on employees' desktops and networks.



Ask:

- Can users print all or part of any file?
- Are documents displayed as designed with important formatting features retained: fonts, styles, columns, tables, headers, footers, page numbers, footnotes and embedded graphics?
- Can users remove old documents?
- Are hyperlinks visible and active?

#4: The company behind the software

It's essential to ensure that the company offering the software is a reputable firm that will be there to support its product and perform due diligence.

Ask:

- Does the company have a track record of supporting new formats, new integrations and browsers?
- How often does the company upgrade its software?
- Has the company earned industry recognition?
- How many users of the software are there?
- What companies are using the software?

Conclusion

IT support calls involving files that can't be opened can be avoided with file-viewing software. In addition to reducing interrupted workflow, user frustration, IT expense, and software licensing fees, the software improves productivity and network security.



About Avantstar and Quick View Plus

Avantstar is home to the world's most recognized desktop file viewing program—Quick View Plus. Since 2001, Avantstar has been focused on solving digital content viewing and content management challenges faced by businesses, government agencies and legal organizations throughout the world. Thousands of companies and millions of users worldwide rely on Avantstar's products to reduce licensing costs on unnecessary software programs to view files or publish critical business information to websites.

Avantstar's Quick View Plus (QVP) desktop file-viewing utility handles the industry's broadest range of application file versions and file types (more than 80 applications and 300 file formats, including Adobe Acrobat; Microsoft Office, Project and Visio, Star Office, OpenOffice, and Corel WordPerfect Office). QVP's comprehensive repertoire of file versions and file types enables companies to avoid installing every possible application or viewing software on every computer in order to share file content. Avantstar updates QVP regularly to accommodate new file formats, applications and versions.

The software integrates with popular email clients, desktops and web browsers to ensure that users can safely and automatically view files. It protects against viruses and other malicious threats by enabling users to view files without opening them. Quick View Plus can be installed in minutes across networks using SMS or scripted installs.

Businesses throughout the world make QVP the #1 choice for eliminating the hassle of support calls from users who can't open email attachments or company files. Among the numerous awards QVP has garnered are *PC Magazine* Editor's Choice, *Government Computer News* Value: A+ rating and *PC Today* 9 out of 10 rating.

To learn more about how QVP can improve productivity and reduce software costs in your organization, contact Avantstar at 877-829-7325 or visit www.avantstar.com.

Avantstar, the Avantstar logo and Quick View Plus are trademarks or registered trademarks of Avantstar, Inc. in the USA and other countries. All other trade names are the property of their respective owners.