

Blanco Technology Group Leverages CloudShare to Scale Up Sales



Introduction

Founded in 1997 and based in the UK, Blanco Technology Group (LON: BLTG) is a leading global provider of data erasure and mobile lifecycle solutions. With a global team of over 300, their data erasure software provides organizations with a suite of tools to enable sustainable data sanitization processes in active environments and across a wide array of IT assets, including servers, laptops, desktops, and drives.

Having integrated CloudShare into their sales enablement processes for over two years now, the company shares how adopting CloudShare supported its strategy for streamlining remote demos for both initial sales calls and “deep-dive” presentations.

The Challenge

Like many software developers, Blanco had initially created “homemade solutions” designed to help their sales teams demo their software portfolio. Over time, it became clear that the labor-intensive processes behind it did not scale anywhere near the pace that the company was scaling; there also was no visibility into who was conducting demos, when, to whom, or for how long.



The Solution

Blanco chose CloudShare to centralize their virtual environments so sales reps could instantly spin up a new, clean, “bullet-proof” demo environment using the latest version, with sales activities and trends tracked by management.



Results

Today, each improvement provided by CloudShare yields a piece of the puzzle for a completely re-imagined sales process: Consistency, time savings, transparency, and completely scalable infrastructure to drive increased sales.



The Challenge

Rudimentary, home-made sales training tools only go so far

Cornelius Bührle, Director of Global Sales Engineering at Blancco, is based in Ludwigsburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Responsible for building and maintaining systems for technical training for Blancco's globally distributed sales team, he knew that successful software sales hinged on smoothly demonstrating features you can see and experience – rather than talking about abstract concepts.

Whether for introductory sales pitches by sales reps hoping to pique interest or sales engineers who need to go deeper with customized demos highlighting specific functionality, Blancco's entire pipeline depends on demos that work the way they should.

With an in-house development team, their demo strategy began with building virtual machines that each sales rep or engineer could keep on a laptop and run as needed.

This approach quickly began to reveal a long list of weaknesses:

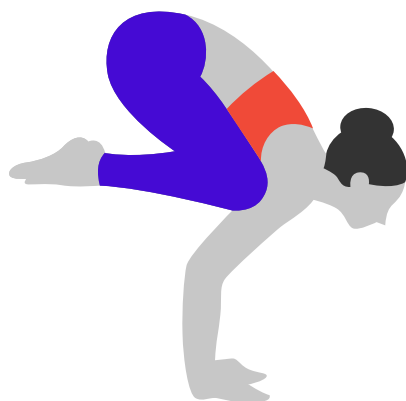
- 1. Fear of Murphy's Law:** The number one worry of any sales professional in the field is that their demo will crash, a feature won't work, or that a client will ask to see something they hadn't prepared. Blancco had salespeople who actually preferred to create elaborate PowerPoints with hundreds of slides, because these were static, predictable, and they didn't crash. But of course, the drawbacks of a static presentation were obvious.
- 2. Unsustainable support:** Maintaining these VMs was time-consuming as well. The sales engineering team spent way too much time with installations, updates, troubleshooting, and hand-holding – and with all that, they still couldn't always be sure that a sales rep didn't have an old version on their laptop. With colleagues to support in Australia, the US, and across Europe, these tasks were never-ending – a source of painful logistical inefficiency.
- 3. No-frills doesn't work:** Putting VMs up on Azure or AWS (which they used for development anyway) was only a solution to hosting the environment. They didn't have a quick way to clone, revert or replace an environment. There was no UI to the sales team to manage anything, and certainly no tracking. [BOX “We wanted everyone out there facing customers to focus on selling, not setup.”]
- 4. Keeping it clean:** Uncomfortable scenarios kept cropping up: For example, if a sales engineer was troubleshooting a particular problem for a potential or existing customer, their environment was often unstable because it was rarely completely re-installed due to the time required.

5. **Distraction for sales engineers:** Often, instead of turning to Cornelius's team, sales reps would themselves tackle much of the setup and maintenance tasks. They would spend their valuable time reverting systems back to a standard install that was ready to launch another demo to the next prospect if sales reps had made any previous modifications.
6. **Who did what, and when?** Finally, Bührlé wanted to track which individuals were presenting the various products in their portfolio, how often, and for how long, to help management gauge activity and traction.
7. The straw that broke the camel's back was simply **scalability**. The company was growing, and sales engineers couldn't keep up with the demand for demos when each one took so long to configure and manage.

It was clear to Bührlé that they needed a solution, centralized and cloud-based, to completely re-engineer the sales process from half a dozen angles. He needed to make the process more efficient, both for his own team and for those out in the field.

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We wanted everyone out there facing customers to focus on selling, not setup



The Solution

Removing the variables with a consistent, bullet-proof platform

Blanco began the CloudShare implementation for the sales engineers, a much smaller group than the sales reps, and more technically inclined. It was a smooth process, as the SEs themselves were eager for a platform that would simplify their sales activities. Armed with a way to clear their own bottleneck, the buzz began to spread, and the larger team of global sales reps began to adopt the solution as well. The CloudShare implementation also coincided with the company's decision to shift from a regional sales approach to a vertical one, in which sales reps would focus on a particular industry or unique use case or environment.

Without complex onboarding or hardware installations, any sales rep could now:

1. Leverage an **up-to-date, optimized VM** without fear of last-minute glitches
2. Easily **choose the relevant environment** and use a blueprint customized to that challenge
3. **Confidently launch a demo** without the need to test a new setup extensively before putting it in front of a prospect
4. Benefit from the **scalability** of this dramatic shift away from technical logistics to focusing on sales strategy



Results

A quick, smooth shift now focuses on sales, not setup

CloudShare quickly became the core of Blancco's sales demos. Still, the process did, at first, need a little push for the team to embrace it. To quickly drive adoption – and more specifically, to demonstrate how simple it is to embed CloudShare into the sales process – they implemented a creative campaign. As part of their monthly goals, sales reps were required to record a training session using CloudShare and share it with colleagues to view and comment on. It was all they needed to understand the simplicity and get hooked on using it as their main sales tool.

TODAY

1

TOMORROW

2

NEXT

3

Tracking everything -

Bührle labeled each environment – representing each product – with a unique ID, which contributed to a comprehensive dashboard that tracked all CloudShare usage. For the first time, he can now share with management a set of valuable reports highlighting which products were being demonstrated, for how long, by whom, and how often. He tracks demos by region or even by specific use cases within a product, so management now knows which people, teams, or products needed additional support.

Preparing for post-sales training -

In addition, Blancco is planning to use CloudShare for both remote and in-person customer training, and are scaling up their internal staff to serve as trainers. They recently had a large client send 60 participants to a training session and used CloudShare as part of that process. It served as a great proof of concept for a new use of the platform they already have confidence in.

CloudShare for channel partners -

Blancco's next steps, explains Bührle, include offering CloudShare environments to channel partners selling Blancco's products; Blancco doesn't have a reliable way to give them the software today. The company wants to help partners represent them confidently, with demonstration software completely clean and safe from any remnant data or configuration. CloudShare, Bührle explains, will be a vast improvement over simply handing over a batch of not-for-sale licenses and asking them to work out the installation and maintenance.



Conclusion - ROI goes way beyond a spreadsheet

When a 45-minute demo starts on time, he explains, keeps the prospect engaged, and runs without a crash or even a pause to solve a minor glitch, it means you've quite possibly saved the sale. When a sales rep reclaims two hours a day, free of technical setup tasks, those are two hours he or she now has available to work on leads. Especially as Blancco scales and gets more focused with the vertical approach, this methodology means they can remove roadblocks that they had simply accepted as part of the game.

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When it comes to sales, let's be honest – the ROI isn't necessarily a simple dollar saving per use. Instead, it's all about an entire process, now infused with rock-solid stability, which directly boosts the success rates for the entire sales organization.



About Us



What is CloudShare?

CloudShare is the most powerful solution for hands-on software experiences; from sales demos and POCs, to customer and employee training, certification, and sandboxing.

Our virtual environments are completely customizable and allow the end-user to experiment with your software in a safe environment that mimics their own, thus enabling the most effective experiences.

CloudShare's Business Acceleration platform enables some of the world's top brands to accelerate their entire customer journey anywhere, in any cloud, anytime.* We're proud to serve leading global software companies such as Palo Alto Networks, RSA, Motorola, Atlassian, SAI Global, Atos, ForgeRock, Dell, Salesforce, and many more.

To learn more about how CloudShare's advanced hands-on software training solutions can benefit your business, visit cloudshare.com

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