



CASE STUDY | Parallels Desktop for Mac **Business Edition**

Target Distribution: How to Employ a Windows ERP System Efficiently without a Single PC

The Company

The year 1976 witnessed not only the establishment of Apple® but also of Target Distribution, Austria's leading value-added distributor for Apple products. In its beginnings, Target Distribution had nothing to do with Apple—it focused solely on electronic components. But in 1993, Target Distribution joined the handpicked circle of authorized Apple distributors. This is when the company's success story really took off. Target Distribution's business started growing rapidly, which prompted the company to relocate to its present location in Koblach in 2010. A staff of around 40 supplies the Austrian IT dealer with the entire range of Apple products, as well as a large portfolio of third-party products from vendors including Lexmark, Microsoft, and Wacom.

Apart from selling products, Target Distribution also focuses on customer services. As Austria's largest independent customer service provider, the company operates its own service centers in Koblach and Vienna, acting as primary drop-in places for faulty Apple devices. Alexander Huber is one of the certified Apple technicians working there. Apart from his customer service duties, he is also responsible for Target Distribution's entire IT infrastructure.

The Initial Situation

Not surprisingly, a Mac® distributor does not make a natural habitat for PCs. The staff's devices at Target Distribution consist of around 30 iMac® and MacBook® computers. Applications running on these devices include the whole range of Apple office programs, as well as the Adobe Creative Cloud applications, which are frequently used by the marketing department.

Windows cannot be excluded altogether, however, because of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) and customer relationship management (CRM) solutions used by Target Distribution. The ERP software used—WinLine from the Austrian software manufacturer Mesonic—does not have a macOS® version. Moreover, WinLine is designed to work seamlessly with Microsoft Office for Windows, creating the additional need to equip at least some of the employees with the Windows version of Microsoft Office.

To solve this issue, Alexander had several different options. Purchasing a number of PCs was not viable. The additional administration overhead would have been too high, and employees would have been less than pleased to be forced to “put up” with a PC. Two other options remained: use Boot Camp®, a Mac utility that enables users to run either macOS or Windows at each system boot; or employ virtualizing software and enable users to run Windows as one of multiple different guest operating systems on an Apple computer.

The Solution

Alexander soon discarded the Boot Camp option; it wouldn't be acceptable for employees to perform a reboot every time they needed the other operating system. The virtualizing option remained, and Alexander took a closer look at a product that was already part of Target Distribution's portfolio: Parallels Desktop® for Mac. This solution allows users to run Windows and macOS in tandem—without any need to reboot. Users can also easily move files between the two operating systems. In addition, Alexander knew that setup, rollout, and daily use of Parallels Desktop would be quite easy to manage. He decided on Parallels Desktop® for Mac Business Edition as his solution.

The Results

Practical experience soon showed that Parallels Desktop Business Edition was the right decision. Setting up and configuring a Windows virtual machine was done in a very short time, and transferring it to other Mac computers that needed the ERP application was also accomplished in just a few easy steps.

The Coherence Mode feature won over employees who used Parallels Desktop Business Edition in their day-to-day work. This mode lets Windows and macOS collaborate in such a seamless way that they seem to be components of a single operating system. A Windows program (such as Mesonic WinLine) is displayed next to Mac applications on the Mac desktop, and documents from Windows and Mac can be stored in the same folders.

Particularly efficient in its use of Mac processor resources, Parallels Desktop Business Edition does not impact users' productivity. Plus, it provides 128 GB of virtual memory. According to Alexander, "Parallels Desktop is the ideal solution for our back office. Instead of compromising our consistent IT environment by adding some PCs because of our Windows-based ERP system and adding to our administration overhead, we have enabled the users in question to switch between operating systems with just one click. All this works quite smoothly and with no impact on efficiency. For sure, we can scarcely quantify the financial expenditure that this solution has saved us."

The Challenge

Austria's leading value-added distributor of Apple products needed a solution to access their Windows-based ERP and CRM applications from Mac computers, enabling the company to avoid purchasing additional PC hardware.

Solution at a Glance

With Parallels Desktop® for Mac, multiple operating systems can be used on a Mac at the same time with no impact on performance. Users can switch between operating systems at any time without the need for a reboot, and data can be shared seamlessly.

Key Results

- Uncomplicated deployment and fail-proof operation
- A consistent, user-friendly IT infrastructure
- Rapid switching between operating systems without reboot
- Content moved between macOS and Windows using copy and paste
- Coherence Mode brings two operating systems onto the desktop
- Professional 24/7 customer support for an unlimited time span