



## "Axess' skills are second to none"

HB Leisure needed access to reliable, responsive, technical expertise to help support and develop its Citrix environment. Axess Systems was chosen to provide support and management of Citrix and related technologies. Axess ensures that HB Leisure has a consistently high quality of service, to underpin the business' growth worldwide.

### Client

HB Leisure (HBL) is the leading provider of skill games: fun, challenging games that are played for prizes. It partners with major theme parks and attractions, and fully manages their skill games operations – at over 150 theme parks and attractions, in over 25 countries across the world. This includes Alton Towers, Thorpe Park, Legoland, Blackpool Tower, Hyde Park Winter Wonderland, and SeaWorld. It also operates 15 family arcades in the UK.

HBL has around 700 users across its 150+ worldwide locations and uses Citrix to provide them with secure access to Windows applications.

"HBL has used Citrix for a long time, it's core

to the way we work, and it's very light touch on client devices," explains Global Head of IT, John Edwards.

### Business driver

"We've got strong in-house technical skills, but we've always needed to be able to draw on specialist skills through a support service," says John.

"As the business grew, expanding across the world, the complexity of our Citrix environment also grew," comments John. "We're now a global business, with the US online until 2am, and then Australia, until Europe's back online, all the time with a very small IT team."



### At a glance

HBL wasn't getting the technical know-how it needed to help support its Citrix environment.

Axess provides the technical skills to support and manage Citrix, Microsoft, and VMware technologies.

- Citrix rebuild strengthens environment
- Active Directory migration and integration
- Very knowledgeable and responsive support
- Proactive management of Citrix NetScaler
- "Consistently good value for money."





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But increasingly, HBL was finding that its existing support provider was falling short.

As John outlines, “Finding a partner that had the relevant Citrix skills and Citrix access was key to us.”

## Solution

“We were referred to Axess to purchase some additional licences initially, but we soon saw their knowledge, and moved our Citrix support contract to them,” states John.

He adds, “I was attracted by Axess’ Citrix skills and their partnership with Citrix, which is at the highest level.”

HBL also needed to upgrade its Citrix infrastructure and asked Axess to undertake the rebuild.

“There were performance issues, due to expansion in users, so we needed to upgrade our Citrix infrastructure. Although the user base had grown, the systems hadn’t,” observes John.

“The project went absolutely swimmingly, the engineers were brilliant, very knowledgeable, and helpful in terms of the skills transfer,” declares John.

The result was a new, more robust and reliable Citrix environment capable of supporting the business’ continued growth.

“I was really impressed with how everything went and that gave me the confidence to move all support to Axess, and everything else thereafter,” remarks John.

Axess provide Citrix support with a higher-level managed service for the NetScaler’s, as well as support for related technologies, such as Microsoft, and VMware.

“One thing I really like about the agreement is the NetScaler management options,” reveals John. “For example, when any CVE’s [Critical Vulnerabilities and Exposures notifications] are issued, Axess notify us about them, dial in, and upgrade the NetScalers.”

Axess has also helped with the design of a new server infrastructure, and a complicated Active Directory migration. Plus, the latest rebuild of the Citrix infrastructure, integrating it with the new domain.

“This provided us with additional high availability, with four management servers, and four NetScalers with two at the front end and two at the back for load balancing,” notes John. “And we now have 10 VDA (Virtual Delivery Agent) servers, which we can easily increase on the fly.”

## Benefits

“Axess’ skills are second to none,” observes John. “Axess has supported the growth of the business and without them we may have experienced users being unable to access Citrix at peak times,” he adds. “They’ve ensured that we maintain a consistently high quality of service.”

“The support desk are always very responsive which is great. They’re always back to us within half an hour, which is very good service”

says John.

He expands, “They’re always hugely knowledgeable, and the ticket goes straight to the right person for the job, responsiveness is absolutely brilliant, technical knowledge is great, and they’re proactive in actioning security updates.”

Axess have been working with HBL since 2017, but over the years John has experienced many specialist support providers. “You tend to find that as you get into a contract, support takes a little bit longer and longer, but we haven’t noticed any of that with Axess – they’re always very responsive.”

“We have a very, very good relationship, they make contact frequently, they know our business really well and their webinars are very useful,” John comments. “Out of all the webinars I hear of, the Axess ones are the ones I make the effort to attend.”

“For anything of a substantial amount, we go out to multiple providers and Axess are always competitive on cost, even against much larger organisations,” remarks John. “Axess provide consistently good value for money.”

John concludes, “Axess’ technical knowledge is absolutely spot-on. There’s nothing we’ve sent their way that they’ve not dealt with. Pricing is good and they’re definitely competitive in the cost of the support agreement and product purchasing. And finally, support response times are great.”

