

## CASE STUDY

# Prescribing Efficiency: How UCB Pharma Found the Perfect Dose With Azure Virtual Desktop and Nerdio

Uncover how UCB transformed its digital workplace environment and slashed Azure costs while reducing the organization's carbon footprint and driving sustainable innovation in the pharmaceutical industry.



**OB·V·US**

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UCB, a global biopharma company with a rich history dating back to 1928, touts a commitment to innovation that extends beyond groundbreaking research to encompass every facet of the organization. With a mission focused on creating value for patients and a dedication to sustainability, UCB stands at the forefront of the healthcare industry.

In an effort to support these noble aims, Ralph Schepke, Head of Digital Workplace Services at UCB, and his endpoint management team are tasked with managing a sprawling network of 13,000 endpoints across a workforce of around 9,000 full-time employees and several contractors. The burden of maintaining hardware and provisioning devices was becoming increasingly cumbersome and costly, so in pursuit of greater efficiency and resource optimization, UCB embarked on a journey to streamline its operations and enhance its digital workplace environment.

*“The traditional approach of provisioning, managing, and shipping additional laptops for external contractors was not only repetitive, but also tedious and expensive. These contractors often come equipped with their own preferred devices, so why not just leverage virtual machines to connect them to the UCB infrastructure?” said Schepke. “In our search for a solution, we evaluated a number of vendors, but Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) stood out for its efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and seamless compatibility with our heavily Microsoft-centric environment.”*

Recognizing the need for specialized expertise in workplace management, UCB partnered with OB-V-US to build out the AVD environment. However, upon implementation, the Digital Workplace Services team quickly realized that managing the platform posed significant challenges. Tasks like building, maintaining, and patching images and deploying software applications proved to be incredibly time-consuming.

With a small team responsible for overseeing all digital workplace services, UCB required a solution that could streamline workflows and reduce time allocated to platform management.

## GUIDANCE FROM A TRUSTED PARTNER

After hearing the challenges faced by the UCB endpoint team, OB-V-US recommended Nerdio Manager for Enterprise to address resource gaps. With a robust suite of features, Nerdio Manager simplifies the management of AVD environments, offering automated provisioning, image maintenance, patching, and software deployment capabilities.

*“At OB-V-US, we are dedicated to delivering value to our customers through cost savings, innovative technology, and operational efficiency. As a result, UCB trusts us deeply when it comes to making IT decisions that will impact the business, which is a testament to our commitment to excellence,” said Kenny Buntinx, CEO, OB-V-US. “When recommending Nerdio to UCB, we were confident that it would not only address the immediate challenges, but also align with the organization’s long-term strategic goals.”*

Despite the trust UCB had in OB-V-US, they remained skeptical about the potential Azure cost savings using Nerdio could generate.

*“When I first read about how significantly Nerdio reduced Azure costs, I couldn’t believe it,” remarked Schepke. “But if Nerdio was going to save us even 20% on our Azure bill, it would be a success, so I wanted to give it a shot. Plus, Nerdio ticked all the right boxes for security and compliance, which is paramount in the pharmaceutical industry. As a biopharma company committed to patient care and data integrity, ensuring the highest standards of security and compliance is non-negotiable.”*

## EMPOWERING A SMALL TEAM

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Once Nerdio was implemented, managing the AVD platform became significantly easier for UCB’s Digital Workplace Services team. With Nerdio, they could better deliver the AVD platform, fully automating mundane tasks like updating images, deploying host pools, and more. Additionally, Nerdio helped the team with DTAP (development, testing, acceptance, and production) to introduce new changes in a very structured way, ensuring smooth transitions and minimizing disruptions.

Perhaps most impressively, Nerdio enabled just a small handful of system engineers to maintain a complex environment that would otherwise require 10-15 engineers to manage. And, if any issues did arise, the UCB team could always reach out to Nerdio’s robust support team for a quick fix.

*“Sure, we could develop something internally, but what happens when it breaks? What if Microsoft introduces a new API or there’s a technical issue?” asked Schepke. “Without proper support, we’d be left stranded. That’s why partnering with Nerdio and OB-V-US was crucial for us. Both vendors provide the support and expertise we need to ensure our AVD environment runs smoothly and efficiently. These partnerships are key to our operation, allowing us to focus on our core objectives without worrying about the intricacies of managing our virtual desktop infrastructure.”*

# AUTO-SCALING FOR SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS

Since late 2023, UCB has been rolling out AVD multi-user virtual desktops at full speed. Not only has Nerdio eliminated a lot of the tedious administrative work for the endpoint team, but the platform's auto-scaling of Azure servers also aligns nicely with UCB's ambitious sustainability goals. Nerdio's Auto-scaling feature contributes to reducing UCB's carbon footprint by dynamically adjusting resource allocation based on demand, minimizing unnecessary energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Auto-scaling feature not only aids in sustainability, but it also contributes to cost savings.

"Previously, our VMs on Azure were running 24/7, even on weekends, resulting in significant expenses. However, once we started using Nerdio, we witnessed an 80% savings, bringing our daily costs to almost nothing," Schepke stated. "Additionally, being able to turn off servers automatically on the weekends when they're not in use has generated substantial savings. We were wasting so much on services that no one was using. Now, with the shared office VDI being used by over 1,000 users, Nerdio has become more indispensable than ever in optimizing our resources."

The Digital Workplace Services team was particularly impressed with Nerdio's Auto-scaling feature during December when less work is typically done. Without any intervention, Nerdio efficiently shut down unneeded servers. This hands-off approach allowed the team to focus on other mission-critical tasks while Nerdio seamlessly managed the infrastructure, further enhancing efficiency and reducing operational overhead.

These cost savings, coupled with environmental benefits, made it easy for Schepke to demonstrate Nerdio's value to both upper management and the organization as a whole.

## ABOUT OB-V-US

As an awarded Microsoft Secure Modern Workplace | Microsoft 365 | Windows 365 and Azure Partner, we work in close cooperation with Microsoft to help international and local companies harvest the full potential of their investments in the hybrid cloud world.

We provide training, knowledge and high-end consultancy services around the powerful capabilities in Azure Virtual Desktop, Windows 365, and Microsoft Intune. OB-V-US is based in Belgium but operates worldwide.

Several of our experts are rewarded with the MVP award and speak and teach at major international seminars and conferences.

We strongly believe that working together with the resources at hand in a company and sharing knowledge is a benefit for all parties.

The right people doing the right things...

For more information, please visit [www.obvus.be](http://www.obvus.be)

## ABOUT UCB

UCB, Brussels, Belgium ([www.ucb.com](http://www.ucb.com)) is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases of the immune system or of the central nervous system. With approximately 9,000 people in approximately 40 countries, the company generated revenue of € 5.3 billion in 2023. UCB is listed on Euronext Brussels (symbol: UCB). Follow us on Twitter: @UCB\_news



## ABOUT NERDIO

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Nerdio adds value on top of the powerful capabilities in Azure Virtual Desktop, Windows 365, and Microsoft Intune by delivering hundreds of features that simplify management, ensure efficient operations, and lower Azure compute and storage costs by up to 80% via automation.

Enterprise IT professionals can deliver and maintain a wide range of virtual Windows endpoints and Windows applications across hybrid workforces with ease and fine-tune end-user computing (EUC) approaches for maximum effectiveness using powerful monitoring and analytics capabilities.

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