Styles of Virtual Desktop setups

There are currently four styles of virtual desktop setups available:

1.) Campus Lab - this has all of the common student lab software available and prints to GoPrint printing release stations. This is the setup used in most of our general use labs and in the vLab “access anywhere” campus lab.

2.) Ancillary Campus Lab - this is primarily the same as the Campus Lab image, but has specific printers installed depending on the user's login location. This setup is typically used in smaller lab setups (less than 10 workstations) that have a small non-GoPrint equipped networked printer available for printing.

3.) Generic Staff Desktop - this virtual desktop has all of the standard commonly used university staff applications preinstalled. This desktop does not keep the user’s preferences and settings and all the changes are removed when the user logs out. However, a staff or faculty member who has a H: drive can save their files there to be accessed during another session or on another computer. Also, this desktop can have specific printers installed depending on the users login location as long as they can use Universal HP or Ricoh drivers. This setup is typically used in office setups that don't typically have a specific user that is using the workstation the majority of the time and is shared among multiple users. An example of this could be a workstation setup to be available for staff to easily access ESS or one particular application (i.e. Banner) where user preferences do not have to be saved.

4.) Standard Staff Desktop - this virtual desktop has all of the standard commonly used university staff applications pre-installed as well. However, this desktop does backup the user's preferences and settings to a server to enable the following:
   - User-specific data and desktop settings, which allow the desktop appearance to be the same regard less of which standard desktop a user gets assigned to when they log in.
   - Application data and settings. For example, these settings allow applications to remember toolbar positions and preferences.
   - Other Windows registry entries configured by applications.
   - The user’s "My Documents" folder is redirected automatically to the user's H: drive.

Network printers can also be assigned to a Standard Staff Desktop user using a policy based technology known as ThinPrint. This however has to be done at the IT department level and is not a user installable option.

It should be noted though that the C: drive on this style of desktop is frozen and users will not be able to install their own applications to the desktop. If a particular application is needed, the user can contact the IT dept. to get the application reviewed, where if needed for business purposes it will either be added to the standard desktop image (usually in cases where a large number of users need the application) or added to an individual user’s desktop profile via a virtualization technology known as ThinApp.

Note: There is also an older style of desktop, known as a "persistent" user desktop, that we are no longer actively deploying. If a user logs into a particular virtual desktop pool (it usually has a name related to a particular university department) it is most likely this style of desktop. The persistent user desktop was found to have issues similar to a traditional desktop computer such as the potential for virus infections which resulted in the further development of the options above.