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## National Football League

# Lenovo Powers the NFL as Official Computer Provider

Reliable Lenovo PC and server solutions optimize league operations and deliver the best fan experience



### Customer Profile

Founded in 1920, America's most popular sports league, the National Football League (NFL) is comprised of 32 franchises across the country. The NFL developed the model for the successful modern sports league, including extensive revenue sharing, competitive excellence, strong franchises and national distribution.

Each year, the teams play one another throughout the four-week preseason, seventeen-week regular season and, for twelve teams, a single-elimination playoff that culminates with the Super Bowl – the world's biggest annual sporting event.

### Introduction

The NFL relies on technology and reliable hardware solutions to operate many facets of its business – from ensuring players' health and safety to analyzing game footage to carrying out day-to-day duties at the league's headquarters in New York City.

In 2007, the NFL turned to Lenovo, to help serve the needs of its various departments with its innovative products, including workstations, desktops and ThinkPad PCs. As an extension of that relationship, Lenovo entered into a marketing partnership with the NFL in 2012, becoming the official computer provider for the league, and in 2015 Lenovo became a server provider for the league as well.

### Challenges

The league requires a number of hardware solutions to keep the organization operating efficiently. Essential among the league's priorities was to find a technology partner with a broad range of products to suit the various uses. "We consider a number of factors when purchasing the right hardware for the NFL," said Aaron Amendolia, IT director, NFL. "We want attractive products with a smart design and top-of-the-line features, but we also value reliability, durability and portability since we're such a mobile company."

**"Lenovo's dedication to research and development keeps us ahead of the curve"**

**John Cave**  
VP of IT

## Solution

The NFL's IT and operations department has worked closely with Lenovo to implement a number of best-in-class hardware solutions, including several System X servers for a number of league operations.

"Lenovo's dedication to research and development keeps us ahead of the curve," said John Cave, VP of IT, NFL. "The combined speed and performance of the ThinkPad line is always improving, so we've been able to continue to upgrade within the family of products over the years without needing to look elsewhere," he said.

## 2015 NFL Draft

ThinkCentre M93z All-in-One and ThinkPad T440s

As part of the 2015 NFL Draft in Chicago, the league hosted a free three-day fan festival known as Draft Town. To support the event, the league used more than 10 ThinkCentre M93z All-in-One desktops to register fans onsite. The desktop's 23-inch display with in-plane switching was ideal for the situation, allowing nearly 180 degree of rotation and making it easy for NFL staff and fans to read the screen's contents from different positions around the PC.

Inside the NFL Draft, each of the league's 32 franchises is given a light and versatile ThinkPad T440s Ultrabooks for Draft support, including accessing the Draft system and tracking each Draft pick. As the devices can be connected to a secure, hardwired network, it ensures the connection to the Draft system is strong at all times – a must when each league is on the clock.

## NFL Injury Video Review System

ThinkStation C30 Workstation

The NFL gives high priority to player health and safety. During every game, NFL staff receives an HD feed from the broadcast truck that is digitally recorded on the Lenovo ThinkStation C30 Workstation. It is used as a replay system during the game so that team's athletic trainers and/or physicians can review the video to see the mechanism of injury.

The HD feed is duplicated to 10 thumb drives after each game, so it's important that the workstation has several expansion slots to plug in expansion cards. The ThinkStation C30 Workstation's multiple video and USB slots meet the league's needs perfectly.

"It's critical that we have the right technology in place to help us share information that impacts decisions about our players' health and safety," said Cave. "All 31 NFL stadiums use the Lenovo ThinkStation C30 Workstation for our Injury Video Review System. The dual-processor workstation is highly reliable and delivers top notch performance while being efficient on space."

**"The ThinkPad T Series is a reliable workhorse that rarely fails. It really is the ultimate mobile solution for our employees"**

**Aaron Amendolia**  
IT director

## NFL Art McNally GameDay Central

ThinkCentre M93p

At the NFL's Art McNally GameDay Central in New York, staff is responsible for operating the centralized consult of Instant Replay for all NFL games. The staff relies on 17 ThinkCentre M93p desktops to receive and play back HD video of every game in real time. The ThinkCentre M93p delivers fast, reliable performance and ensures the staff decodes the footage on the graphics processing unit with ease.

## The NFL Experience

ThinkCentre M93z All-in-One

Each year at the Super Bowl, the NFL hosts the "NFL Experience," a nine-day interactive event. While there, fans have the opportunity to use the same research tools game officials use for analyzing game footage on more than 50 Lenovo ThinkCentre M93z desktops. The 10-point multitouch capabilities and wide viewing angle allow fans to pan, zoom and rotate with their fingers on the FHD screen, giving them a true sportscaster experience.

## NFL Films

ThinkPad T440s

NFL Films, an NFL owned company responsible for producing commercials, films and documentaries has deployed T440s to assist in behind-the-scenes operations in the control room, including creating rundowns for all of the shows in the newsroom, running prompted scripts for the on-stage promoters and additional internet research and email communication.

"The ThinkPad T Series is a reliable workhorse that rarely fails," added Amendolia. "We've upgraded over the years, and each model is consistently light weight with a long-lasting battery. It really is the ultimate mobile solution for our employees." Combined, NFL Films currently has close to 400 Lenovo products in its New Jersey offices.

## NFL Headquarters

ThinkPad T440s, ThinkCentre M92z All-in-One, ThinkCentre M93p Tiny Desktop and System x Servers

NFL employees rely on Lenovo ThinkPad T440s and T430s along with ThinkCentre M92z all-in-ones and M93p Tiny desktops at the league's headquarters in New York City. In addition to needing a reliable PC for use in the office, it's important that headquarter employees have a light weight, mobile product that can be used no matter where they're working from that particular day. With 32 franchises across the country, employees are often working from any number of locations or events. The Lenovo ThinkPad T440s gives employees the same functionality while on the road as they have in the office.

**"Lenovo servers are the NFL's top pick to power the league's virtual infrastructure, as they exceed the requirements for energy consumption, form factor and speed."**

**Aaron Amendolia**  
IT director

“We’re constantly shipping our technology equipment all over the place for use at games and remote events. Hot, cold, indoors, outdoors– and we need a product that will work for us in that setting. Lenovo’s breadth of high quality, reliable products provides us with the ability to find the right solution for all of the league’s operations, no matter what the task,” said Michelle McKenna-Doyle, CIO, NFL.

The NFL headquarters is also outfitted with a number of ThinkCentre M92z all-in-ones. Its touchscreen capabilities offer employees enhanced interaction, and the intuitive, tile-based display is easy to control and useful for filling out injury waivers. The headquarters has recently rolled out several ThinkCentre M93p Tiny desktops, which feature the needed enterprise-level performance and reliability. With the Tiny desktop’s flexible mounting system, the NFL is able to fit the new PCs just about anywhere.

## At the Game

ThinkPad X1 Carbon Ultrabook and M93p Tiny Desktop

The ThinkPad X1 Carbon Ultrabook is the perfect companion to NFL employees traveling and working at a football game – it’s light, durable and has up to 8.2 hours of unplugged battery life. ThinkPad X1 Carbon Ultrabook’s high processing power and powerful Graphics performance gives NFL the power to review the footage and media clips with smooth scrolling.

The NFL also values the ThinkPad Precision Keyboard’s island style key. “We’ve found that our employees really appreciate the look and feel of the ThinkPad Precision Keyboard,” said Amendolia. “The keys are comfortable and the backlit keyboard makes it easier for our folks to work in dark environments when traveling to games.”

In the 2015 football season, the NFL will also roll out 100 M93p Tiny desktops to support the league’s new instant replay system at each of the NFL stadiums. “We chose this model due to its small size but extremely high performance,” said Cave.

Additionally, in 2015, the NFL rolled out 60 Lenovo System x3550 M5 servers to host the league’s virtual VMware infrastructure at both the headquarters and at NFL Films. The two socket configuration, high-performance processors and advanced RAM capacity are ideal for reliably supporting the NFL’s business-critical applications and Lenovo’s top-notch service and support make ongoing management easy.

“Performance, efficiency and confidence are qualities needed both on the field and in the NFL’s IT department,” said Amendolia. “Lenovo servers are the NFL’s top pick to power the league’s virtual infrastructure, as they exceed the requirements for energy consumption, form factor and speed.”

The NFL currently relies on more than 1,900 Lenovo products in its operations across the organization, and continues to regularly refresh its fleet of products with the latest Lenovo technologies. “Lenovo has been a great business partner to the NFL. The relationship truly feels like a partnership, rather than just your average vendor relationship,” said McKenna-Doyle.

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**Michelle McKenna-Doyle**  
CIO, NFL

## The NFL chose Lenovo as the official hardware partner for

- Simplified workspace management with no compromise on performance, features and reliability
- Products that support advanced multimedia functionality and processing power
- For the top-notch service and support that allows easy manageability
- Devices that are rugged, durable and built to stand up to wear and tear

## Hardware Deployed

### Product Benefits:

#### ThinkCentre M93z All-in-One

Large 23" full HD LED display with in-plane switching offers a wide viewing angle, so multiple users can read the screen's contents from different positions around the PC

#### ThinkPad T440s

Ultrathin, ultra-light and ultra-durable construction and uncompromising performance make it the right choice for professionals on the move

#### ThinkPad X1 Carbon

Right mix of features like light and durable design, 8.2 hours of battery life, business-class security, high processing power and graphic performance offers performance you need anytime, anywhere.

#### ThinkPad M93p Tiny Desktop

Micro, mountable design that practically fits anywhere. Offers multi-monitor display and provides solid security and reliable enterprise-level performance

#### ThinkCentre M92z All-in-One

Offers enterprise-level performance, reliability, and productivity in at a space-saving, eco-friendly package

#### System x3550 M5

Fuels almost any workload from virtualization to high-performance computing (HPC) to cloud or big data with leadership security, efficiency, and reliability.

#### ThinkStation C30 Workstation

Gives ultimate performance with full featured scalability. Offers faster data transfer, solid security and manageability.

**Total number of devices deployed : 1,900**



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