

Switching to Dell KACE 'insures' Allianz Global saves time and money



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*Jeffrey Jones, IT Client,
Services Manager, Allianz Global*



Customer Profile

Industry:	Insurance
Country:	United States
Employees:	500
Web:	www.agcs.allianz.com/en

Business Need

Allianz Global invested heavily in a software-only solution to handle its systems management needs for 750 systems spread out across North America, but the IT staff struggled with managing critical tasks such as physical inventory, software distribution, configuration management and patch management.

Solution

The company consolidated dozens of financial and real estate applications into a centralized SAP solution, on a platform of clustered Dell™ PowerEdge® servers and Dell/EMC networked storage systems. EMC RecoverPoint data protection software helps ensure fast, reliable system recovery. Dell Professional Services and the Dell SAP Competency Center helped size, design and install the SAP applications on a Microsoft® Windows® environment with Microsoft SQL Server® database. VMware ESX Server lets the company create dozens of virtual servers instead of physical ones.

Save Time.

Save Your Organization Money.

- Time savings of more than \$114,000 annually
- Decreased time spent on inventory by 50 percent
- Significant time savings due to more efficient patching capabilities
- Deployment in 1 week
- Training in 1 month
- More than \$60,000 saved on miscellaneous provisioning costs
- More than \$41,000 of labor productivity gains
- Eliminated more the \$30,000 in competitor maintenance fees
- ROI achieved in less than five months
- Saved more than \$10,000 in energy costs annually
- Saved more than 5,000 planned "powered down" hours using the Dell KACE Appliance power savings capability

Allianz Global Corporate and Specialty is dedicated to providing its customers corporate, property and specialty insurance solutions. The company reaches clients worldwide by operating in 70 countries, and insuring more than half of the world's Fortune 500 companies. Established in November of 2005 as a result of the merger of Allianz Global Risks and Allianz Marine & Aviation, the company currently employs almost 500 people in North America, spread among seven different offices in Burbank, California, Chicago, Atlanta, New York, Houston, Denver and Toronto.

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Allianz Global's IT staff is charged with serving the needs of more than 750 computer systems spread among its multiple North American offices. The team relies heavily on systems management technology to run a variety of tasks including software updates, physical inventory, patch management, and more. Prior to the Dell KACE Management Appliance, Allianz Global invested heavily in LANDesk to handle its systems management needs. The IT staff grew more and more frustrated with the technology in each passing day as the solution was simply not keeping pace with the organization's diverse IT needs.

Struggling To Keep Pace

Despite promises that the software-only technology would be able to keep pace, the IT team was overwhelmed by the solution's complexity and also disappointed as the technology struggled to perform even the most routine of management tasks. Specifically, the LANDesk solution had difficulty managing tasks such as physical inventory, software distribution, configuration management, and also patch management— all of which were critical daily assignments for the Allianz Global IT team.

Due to compatibility issues, the team had to manually run software updates with the LANDesk solution, which were not only cumbersome, but consumed crucial IT hours. For this busy

department regular manual software updates levied heavy time pressures on the already time-strapped team.

Furthermore, the software-only technology proved to be quite costly. On average, Allianz Global was running an additional \$30,000 in maintenance costs and updates each year. Although the software-only technology offered some of the features the department was looking for, the IT team knew there had to be a better solution that could provide the time savings and high-quality features at the price point Allianz Global required. Additionally, the team wanted an easy-to-use solution that could handle the many different duties the IT team was tasked with, while also alleviating some of the day-to-day pressure due to time-consuming processes from using LANDesk.

Need To Cut Costs

To make matters worse, systems administrators were challenged by corporate with helping to cut costs and reduce time spent on IT projects. At this time it became apparent that a systems management solution change needed to take place. The new solution would

Technology at Work

Solutions

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance

need to deliver on managing all of the systems management tasks that were important to Allianz Global and also be available in one centralized location.

"Our IT team was feeling the pressure, and clearly LANDesk just wasn't the solution for us," says Jeffrey Jones, IT Client Services Manager for Allianz Global. "LANDesk was able to perform some of the tasks we required, but with its high-price we felt we just weren't getting enough out of it. We needed a new, easy-to-use systems management solution that satisfied all of our needs in one console."

The Dell KACE Management Appliance Fills Holes

With the LANDesk solution struggling to fulfill IT requirements as needed and also as expected, Jones and his team determined it was high time to evaluate other systems management solution options. They spoke with several vendors and found the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance offered the features they were looking for at a very reasonable price. After viewing an online product demonstration, Jones and his team decided to move forward with deployment of the Dell KACE Appliance, which took less than one week. Staff training was completed in less than one month. The ease-of-use of the Dell KACE Appliance appeared instantly and helped to increase the team's productivity dramatically. The Dell KACE Appliance offered instant visibility into Allianz Global's software and hardware inventory across its multiple offices. In addition the Dell KACE Appliance displayed the information on a single, central console—something the team was never able to do with the software-only solution.

"Immediately after deploying our Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance we began reaping benefits that we long wanted with LANDesk, but simply were not able to achieve," says Jones. "Along with being easy-to-use and offering

incredible time savings with the tasks that we perform each day, we found our Dell KACE Appliance to be incredibly flexible and reliable. We now have the opportunity to do so many things that we couldn't even think about prior to the Dell KACE Appliance."

In addition to the time and money savings the team experienced with the Dell KACE Appliance, Jones and the IT department found the technology also provided them the ability to obtain real-time data of their inventory, and gain deep insight into all of the details available from a hardware inventory, all in one single appliance. Prior to the Dell KACE Appliance, the IT team was tasked with manually recording data from each machine and then updating the information each time client inventory changed. Eliminating manual inventory tracking gave the Allianz Global IT team the opportunity to channel its energy toward other projects team members previously never had time for. In the future, Allianz Global also hopes to use the Dell KACE Appliance for auditing purposes, which will give them the ability to track unauthorized equipment that may be plugged into the company network.

Another appliance feature that proved to be greatly beneficial to the IT team was patch management, which provides IT organizations security without the time, complexity and cost of traditional solutions. While the software-only solution required that its patch management module be purchased separately, the Dell KACE Appliance included the patch management feature in the total cost of its solution. Additionally, the module automatically downloads patches as they became available. Patch deployment became much more concise and manageable for the team. With the Dell KACE Appliance, Allianz Global is now able to review all patches in one centralized location and determine which are

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necessary to deploy. They are even able to use this feature to better manage urgent circumstances, such as installing critical patches on all computers company-wide.

Saving \$114,000 Per Year

Today, it's estimated that the Dell KACE Appliance saves Allianz Global's IT team hundreds of hours annually, translating to more than \$114,000 each year. Additionally, the Dell KACE Appliance paid for itself in less than five months. The IT team agrees the ease-of-use, time savings, flexibility and reliability are all important new features that the Dell KACE Appliance has brought to the department.

"Prior to our deployment of the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance, it was difficult to do our jobs in an effective manner," says Jones. "Now, with our Dell KACE Appliance, we actually have the time to dig deeper into other projects that we never had the time to focus on previously, which is an added bonus on top of the other great features that the technology brings to our IT department and organization as a whole."



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