



Black Diamond controls systems management with Dell KACE™



Customer profile



Company	Black Diamond Equipment
Industry	Outdoor Equipment
Country	United States
Employees	500
Website	www.blackdiamondequipment.com

Challenge

As a newly public company with increasing compliance requirements, Black Diamond needed a more systematic and streamlined way to handle software licensing and patch management.

Solution

Black Diamond selected the Dell KACE Management Appliance to gain control over patch management, while saving time and money due to improved software license processes and service desk efficiencies

Save time.

Save your organization money

- Reduced time spent on systems management tasks from weeks to days
- Reduced the need to hire additional headcount to manage systems

Application areas

- Systems management

“I was sold on the Dell KACE Appliance from day one. The price point was perfect, and we liked the fact that everything we needed—inventory management, patching and compliance—was wrapped up into an all-in-one solution.”

*Matt May, service desk analyst,
Black Diamond*

Climbing and outdoor gear manufacturer Black Diamond Equipment sells its products both online and to national and global retailers such as REI. The company's origins date back to 1957 when its predecessor, Chouinard Equipment, started making hand-forged pitons for climbers.

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Over the following decades, Black Diamond has become synonymous with innovative design, manufacturing and marketing of its performance products for outdoor recreation. Black Diamond also operates a stand-alone store at its Salt Lake City headquarters, and has 500 employees company-wide.

Black Diamond went public in late 2010, which meant that its IT department needed to take special care in meeting licensing and compliance requirements relating to software purchases and updates. However, the company's existing solution—Microsoft® Windows Deployment Services used in tandem with Windows Server Update Services (WSUS)—was not providing the consistent performance and automation needed to meet this challenge.

With more than 375 desktop computers, 125 laptops, 24 physical servers, and thousands of software licenses, the company needed a robust systems management solution that addressed the management of both software licensing and patch management.

"We needed a better way to manage patch management and inventory in order to meet the new compliance requirements, and that was the primary driver that led us to look for a new solution," explained Matt May, service desk analyst for Black Diamond. "We simply didn't have a solid system in place for managing our systems—it was very ad hoc, with several homegrown solutions. We had no way of knowing which machines had which applications or had received software patches."

The search for an efficient inventory and patch management solution

Black Diamond's small, but global IT team of 14 set out to develop criteria to find an efficient systems management solution to streamline the management of its patch and software licenses.

"Our main criteria included a built-in inventory tool so that we could work with the finance department on managing inventory, as well as licensing controls to see if we were in or out of compliance when we distributed or upgraded software," May said. "We also needed tools to quickly push out applications and patches for our users."

Black Diamond considered network management and monitoring solutions from Spiceworks, Symantec Altiris, and LANDesk, as well as the Dell KACE Appliance. "I was sold on Dell KACE from day one," May said. "The price point was perfect, and everything we needed—inventory management, patching and compliance—was wrapped up into an all-in-one solution," May explained. "Because it's scalable, we knew Dell KACE would also allow us to grow—which was critical, especially now that we're a public company."

Technology at work

Application

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance

Increased patch compliance and policy enforcement

Black Diamond deployed the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance, an easy-to-use, comprehensive and affordable appliance that fulfills all of the systems management needs from initial inventory and discovery, software distribution, configuration management, patching and security vulnerability remediation to asset management, service desk and reporting.

The company initially used its Dell KACE Appliance for license compliance and patch management. "The biggest initial benefit we saw was with patch management. The Smart Labels feature has helped us quickly identify the computers that need patches so we can address them immediately."

The Black Diamond IT team now also has greater visibility into security enforcement and possible use of illegal download of digital files. "Prior to Dell KACE, we knew that some workers were accessing torrent websites and other sites hosting illegal content," May said. "Now we can identify people who access this content, which helps the IT team better enforce our policies about acceptable use."

Black Diamond reduces time spent on managing software updates

The ability to easily manage software updates has greatly shortened the time it takes for the Black Diamond IT team to update existing machines or deploy new ones.

"Typically it can take anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours for me to obtain a machine, install updates and patches, restart the machine, and make sure it works properly," May explained. "Now I can build a package and push it out to the end user in 15 minutes—and often it's a quiet install that doesn't require a restart, so there's no downtime for the end user."

In addition to saving time for the IT team and Black Diamond's end users, the Dell KACE K1000 has also helped save money on licensing fees. "If we have someone who needs Adobe Illustrator, I can see who else in the company has a license but does not use it that often," May said.

The benefits of the Dell KACE Appliance have led May to recommend the product to colleagues. "A friend from my former company needed a new systems management solution, and I suggested Dell KACE. I even helped them get it up and running!"

"We've noticed that incident tickets have gone down since we started using Dell KACE. Response to tickets used to take as long as a week, but now we can respond to all tickets in less than a day, which helps our end users improve their productivity."

*Matt May,
service desk analyst,
Black Diamond*



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