



FAST GROWING CITY OF FRANKLIN SAVES TIME, MONEY WITH KACE™



KBOX™ helps maintain mission critical city systems operations, provides time for other major technology initiatives

BACKGROUND

The City of Franklin, Tennessee was founded in 1799 and was named after Benjamin Franklin. Once a bustling center of the plantation economy of the ante-bellum South, the city and surrounding countryside was devastated by the Civil War. It took more than 120 years for the city's economy to recover and even reach pre-war levels. Today, with more than 46,000 residents, it is the 10th largest city in Tennessee and the fastest growing. Technology has to keep pace with this growth.

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CHALLENGE

Consolidated operations demand more time for software management, control

Over the last several years, the City of Franklin consolidated information technology operations and management under one department to support the growing city offices plus police and fire—more than 500 employees. One of the biggest challenges is keeping control over software inventory, patching, rollouts, licensing and more at a time when the city is also launching three major capital expenditure technology projects.

Fred Banner, MIT Director for the City of Franklin, has a team of five to manage IT operations and support. They look after more than 60 servers, 300 mobile clients and 350 desktops. They have standardized on a Microsoft operating environment—Windows Server 2003 for the networks and Windows XP Pro on the desktops. The networking infrastructure is all Cisco-based. The city runs a wide range of applications, from specialized 911 police and fire systems to standard Microsoft Office desktop productivity suites.

Major technology initiatives challenge time-constrained systems team

Before consolidation of server systems under Banner, each department managed their own environment, which meant different versions of software on each workstation. As demand for more IT services grew, it was time to find a way to manage services for all systems. At the same time, Banner and his group was busy designing, planning and starting the rollout of three major new city IT projects. The first was a citywide wireless network for employees, promising 2Mb throughput

to every node on the network. The second was running fiber to every outlying city office. Currently 2 city offices are on fiber, with 14 scheduled for access by 2008 and 16 by 2009. Finally, the team was installing a new Cisco voice-over-IP telephone system across the city. This small team had a lot on its hands.

KACE TIME: CITY OF FRANKLIN

DEPLOYMENT

One day

TRAINING

8 hour Web-based training

TIME AND MONEY SAVINGS

- Eliminated the need for two additional staff
- Transparent management of over 300 nodes
- Provided time to focus on other critical projects
- All-in-one appliance means less to manage and maintain

Not enough time in the day to effectively maintain a diverse network

Jason Potts, network administrator for the City of Franklin and a key member of Banner's team was focused on solving the ongoing network maintenance challenge. He realized there might be an opportunity to also help the team more effectively implement the three major capital projects.

“Keeping everything updated was just impossible,” Potts recalled. “We had different vendors, applications, licenses, patches, the 911 stuff that has to stay up to date running on 50 to 70 boxes. There was just not enough time in the day to maintain a network. That's when we started looking for an application or appliance solution to help us out.”

Software alternatives complex, offer only point solutions

Potts identified four major needs that any solution had to address. Most important to the team was the ability to push out to users any patches and software updates. The process had to be transparent to the users and not require granting them administration rights. The solution had to automate maintaining standard operating environments down to individual office/department levels. It also had to manage all the Windows operating system patches automatically and seamlessly. Finally, it had to inventory what applications were running where, track licenses and keep all applications current.

The team moved quickly. They looked at several alternative solutions, including Microsoft Windows Update just for the Windows patches and updates. They also considered Microsoft SMS, but, Potts said, "That thing is a beast to work with." Altiris seemed to offer a complete software solution but then Mike Proctor, another key team member, found KACE on a Google search and he and Potts were immediately impressed.

SOLUTION

KBOX addresses critical requirements, shortens evaluation and deployment time

"There weren't any weaknesses in the KBOX and it had all we wanted in one package," Potts said. "We were very impressed with all it did compared to other things we looked at. As soon as we found the KBOX, we went with it." The critical factors in favor of the KBOX decision came down to three things that were particularly important to the City of Franklin team. KBOX could push out applications and software updates that were not just Microsoft. It could deliver patches and updates without granting users administration rights. But the most important factor was the appliance approach.

"The all-in-one appliance means you have less to manage and set up and maintain," Potts said. "Plus it works with Active Directory and communicates through LDAP. We had it running within a few hours. And I can keep things updated without the user ever knowing."

KBOX eliminates need for additional staff, adds time for major projects

Potts said it was simple to make the business case to justify the KBOX purchase. He uses it now to manage 300 nodes on the network and plans to expand its use as the network grows. He calculates that the KBOX saved him as much as two full-time equivalent headcounts in the group. And that means they have two more people available to help the team on the major capital IT projects that they are rolling out across the city.

"We justified the purchase on headcount," Potts said. "And I have automated software management on my network. The more I can automate from the IT side, the better. People in government don't like change—'this is my computer, you have to check with me before you do anything to it'—but as the IT guy your job is to keep everything updated."

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Features and support make customer a KACE champion

Potts said he was also sold on the KACE service and support. "You couldn't ask for any better support than KACE," Potts said. "Their support is probably the best I have ever received on anything I have ever bought."

The features and support by KACE have made Potts a champion for the company and he has recommended the KBOX to his peers at other government offices in the state.

SAVE TIME AND MONEY WITH KBOX SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT APPLIANCE

Faster System Evaluation and Justification

- Comprehensive functionality in a single appliance
- Less complex than software alternatives

Streamlined Deployment and Training

- System deployed within hours
- Eliminated offsite staff training

Immediate ROI

- Eliminated need for two additional staff
- Managing 300 nodes, scalable as the network grows
- Updates now transparent to users
- Provides time for other critical technology projects
- Single appliance means less to manage and maintain



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