



# GREY WORLDWIDE EASES MANAGEMENT OF ITS MIXED MAC AND WINDOWS ENVIRONMENT WITH KBOX



**KBOX™ solves international software distribution, license management and compliance challenges in a timely way**

## BACKGROUND

Established in 1917, Grey Group ranks among the world's largest communications companies. It prides itself on using top-level, cutting-edge technology to support its projects and growing number of employees, now over 6,500. Its advertising arm, Grey Worldwide, is among the largest advertising agencies in the world and is spread across 121 offices in 116 cities, including San Francisco.

“KACE technology allows smaller teams, as well as large teams, to run a very smart IT shop by allowing us to easily manage issues before they grow into bigger problems. This is on top of the first-class support we get for our KBOX appliance and the ability to manage daily maintenance tasks with ease.”

— Chris Head, IT Manager, Grey Worldwide

“We were looking for a new systems management solution that worked equally well across Mac and Windows platforms. After an evaluation of all available options, we realized KACE was the clear choice for us.” — Chris Head, IT Manager, Grey Worldwide

## CHALLENGE

The IT department of Grey Worldwide's San Francisco offices consists of two systems administrators tasked with managing 160 computers office-wide. Grey relies on a mixed environment of Mac- and Windows XP-based operating systems (OSs). Tasks, such as patch management, asset management tracking, or even daily maintenance procedures, often had to be performed manually as administrators did not have the tools or processes in place to run batch jobs for its mixed environment.

“The Windows and Mac systems meet the diverse needs of our employees and serve different functions, but simply managing these systems alone proved to be a full-time job in itself. We needed a system that could reliably handle many of the tasks we routinely do, freeing IT staff to focus on higher-level projects. Additionally, we needed something that could accurately and quickly reflect the status of our workstation environment, without our having to cobble together data from multiple reporting systems,” said Chris Head, IT manager for Grey Worldwide. “Our former ticket and asset management systems worked on our Windows machines, but we didn't have reporting capabilities for our investment in Macs. In short, we needed to be able to both manage and report on our full environment, but the tools we had in place were too inflexible or proprietary, causing us more work for less gain.”

## Patch management and reporting were “frankly, hideous”

Prior to deployment of KACE technology, the San Francisco office's IT team used various systems management tools and methods that

simply did not work as promised. As Grey's IT staff was evaluating more flexible cross-platform management systems than the one already in place, they looked into implementing LAN Manager as a “one-stop shop.” The tool proved to be expensive for Grey's small environment and required hardware, software, and a dedicated team to support it. It was evident the product was built for a much larger computing environment.

### KACE TIME: GREY WORLDWIDE

**DEPLOYMENT**  
30 minutes

**TRAINING**  
Five one-hour training sessions

**TOTAL SAVINGS**

- More than \$115,000 saved in first year
- ROI in less than two months
- IT department saves over 2,250 hours annually

The IT team sat down to zero in on the key areas that weren't working for the department. First and foremost they weren't able to seamlessly handle regular software updates for its mixed environment; the Windows environment had a centralized patch management system, but only for Windows and Office patches, while the Macintoshes had no centralized patching system and required management intervention to ensure machines were patched properly. Neither system could handle non-OS patches effectively, such as those for Adobe's products. Additionally, they couldn't efficiently handle software deployment tasks. There was a huge need to perform network-wide software deployments and updates as the majority of Grey Worldwide computers run a variety of Adobe products, which require regular updates.

In fact, Adobe Creative Suite 3 requires updates every six months. If ignored, outdated versions running on the system slows end-user performance dramatically and can cause system crashes or even file incompatibilities with other users. Their existing ticketing system was also a resource drain in time, resources and budget, and had a proprietary platform-specific interface, making it unwieldy.

The IT team knew they needed to figure out a new approach to managing its systems as agency staffing was increasing rapidly and IT needed to be able to respond quickly to the changes in the user environment.

## SOLUTION

### KACE delivers on promise of an easy-to-use management appliance

With their myriad of systems management solutions not performing as hoped and the IT budget quickly depleting, Grey Worldwide's San Francisco IT team began its search for a cost-effective desktop management solution that was capable of managing a mixed Mac OS X and Windows environment with ease.

For Chris and his team, there were numerous features of KBOX that stuck out when researching the technology – from help desk and asset management capabilities to patching and compliance. Of course the fact that KBOX has the ability to easily manage a mixed environment was also a standout feature. Out of the box, KBOX was up and running in only 30 minutes and immediately began sending agents to client machines that reported useful documentation, listing out all hardware and software assets used by each of their clients. The performance and response time were jaw-dropping compared to what the IT team was used to previously. One of Grey's chief desktop management requirements was a help desk feature that was easy for all end-users to understand. With KBOX, they got that by way of a unique email notification system. Now, the IT team is able to respond to help desk calls through an automatic email alert that lets users know they are working on a particular problem. What's more, the automated software patch deployments performed by KBOX works over Grey's cross-platform environment.

### Problems detected quickly before they became user issues

Immediately, the IT team recognized KBOX caught most issues before their users even knew about a problem. Because KBOX is able to monitor and work across a mixed environment, it is able to detect problems, such as abnormally high CPU utilization that past tools did not catch. In the past, it took customer complaints to alert the IT team to system issues. Further, KBOX reporting and patching tools were instrumental in coordinating everything needed for a recent SOX audit; the previous tools could not have given such detailed information in such a short time frame.

“Another highlight to KBOX is the lightning-fast, easy-to-use Web-based interface that allows us to control activity from any machine on the network. We were looking for remote management capabilities so we wouldn't be locked to our desks. With the KBOX, I can do nearly everything remotely, even from my Apple iPhone, which I've occasionally needed to do.”

— Chris Head, IT Manager, Grey Worldwide

In addition, KBOX automates many manual tasks which eliminate the contractors and part time employees that were a drain on the limited IT budget. In all, KBOX saved Grey Worldwide more than \$100,000 in its first year of deployment alone and gave an ROI payback period of under two months.

Finally, one of the greatest benefits is KACE customer support. “The benefits to KBOX are numerous, but something we weren't expecting was the excellent customer service we got from KACE. A lot of vendors sell you their products and then you never hear from them again. We received unsolicited phone calls from KACE customer service the day we received the appliance, and KACE has been there the entire way, offering multiple free training sessions, as well as group training when we need it. KACE, by far, offers the best customer experience we've seen in the industry,” concluded Head.

## SAVE TIME AND MONEY WITH THE KBOX SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT APPLIANCE

### Faster and more reliable Asset Management

- The ability to track assets across a mixed environment
- Began tracking software and hardware assets in 30 minutes

### Cost Savings

- ROI of under two months
- Saved \$2,000 per year on retired ticketing system

### Time Savings

- Saved 1,000 hours or almost \$50,000 per year in Help Desk management
- Allows the IT department to run management tasks remotely



1616 North Shoreline Boulevard  
Mountain View, CA 94043  
877-MGMT-DONE Main  
650-316-1050 International  
650-649-1806 Fax

www.kace.com  
info@kace.com

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