

The Dell KACE Appliance cures the IT ills of Island Hospital



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*Steve Coryell, IT Assistant Director,
Island Hospital*

Customer Profile

Industry:	Healthcare
Country:	United States
Web:	www.islandhospital.org

Business Need

Software deployment was painfully slow while physical inventory and auditing were also a headache for the IT team. The IT budget was so tight and the workload was so high that the IT team was forced to consistently fight fires instead of being strategic about maximizing IT objectives.

Solution

After seeing a demonstration of the Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance and K2000 Deployment Appliance, the hospital knew it was by far the easiest technology to deploy and administer compared to the other offerings they evaluated. Within minutes of deployment, the appliance began tracking physical and software assets, detailing all of the software and applications running on each of the hospital's 500 computers.



**Save Time.
Save Your Organization Money.**

- 7-week payback
- 1-year return on investment of more than 500%
- More than \$110,000 in savings first year in service
- \$17,000 savings in software distribution costs alone
- More than 2,500 hours of IT administration tasks automated in first year
- 1,800 hours of service-desk administration time saved in first year

Island Hospital, located in Anacortes, Washington, is known for its broad range of healthcare services which are offered in an intimate, family friendly acute-care facility. The geography that the regional hospital serves in western Washington State is vast, stretching from Skagit County, south to Whidbey Island and including the San Juan Islands. Recently named by Solucient, a national health-care information corporation, as one of the top 100 hospitals in the nation for performance improvement, Island Hospital boasts top-of-class patient care.

“We estimate we saved over \$110,000 during the first year alone using the Dell KACE Appliances. Seriously, the hardest part of deploying the appliances was running the wires! Most important, however is the technology gave us back hundreds of work hours.”

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Island Hospital (Island) has seen continued year-over-year growth both in patients seeking the hospital's services and also in a rise of new hospital staff. The number of computers the IT team supported jumped 60 percent in just two years to a total of 500 end points. The number of servers swelled to 60. This on-going growth imposed significant challenges to Island's six-person IT staff. The team found it more and more difficult to keep up with basic IT maintenance tasks, such as software deployment, asset management and service-desk management.

In addition to general IT challenges brought on by a growing organization, the healthcare industry in particular is under a tremendous amount of pressure to comply with strict government regulations such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Though created to ensure top-of-the-line patient care, regulations such as HIPAA typically increase the duties of already taxed IT administrators. What's more, Island Hospital was also affected by the current sluggish economy and therefore did not have the budget available to hire more IT employees to support the growing IT infrastructure. According to Steve Coryell, IT assistant director at Island Hospital, as other

areas of the hospital were hiring new staff to support the growth, the IT department had to keep its current head count and somehow do more with the same resources.

Service desk and software licensing were in 'poor health'

Following the news that Island Hospital's IT team wouldn't be getting additional staff to support the hospital's ever-growing infrastructure, the team took a close look at its technology to see where improvements could be made and procedures streamlined. One example was the software deployment system. The process was painfully slow, taking up far too many hours from the severely time-strapped IT team. The hospital used Windows Server® Update Services (WSUS) for patch management and software deployment. The outdated technology required software deployments to be done with only small batches of computers at a time. This

Technology at Work

Solutions

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance

Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance

"piecemeal" approach was exacerbated by the hospital's tight security policy, which denies end users from making any software updates on their own. Everything started and ended with the IT team, and the slow process for updating computers kept the team from working on more important projects meant to enhance patient care.

Physical inventory and auditing were also a headache for the IT team. Government standards require hospitals to maintain a strict understanding of the software and hardware being used. Coryell and his team realized they were not adequately addressing their software licensing or hardware inventory management needs because they lacked a tool that could tell them exactly what they were running on all 500 machines.

The team previously relied on manual inventory tracking methods by way of spreadsheets which was not sufficient. The result was money lost due to out-of-date software licenses and expired hardware warranties.

"Our budget was so tight and our workload was so high that we were forced to consistently fight fires instead of being strategic about maximizing our IT objectives," Coryell explains. "We needed a better systems management solution that would allow us to deliver the level of service a top 100 hospital in the nation is expected to have."

Dell KACE appliance eases pain of past systems management methods

With its previous systems management solution not performing at expected levels, the hospital began its search for a more cost-effective, easy-to-use solution that was capable of handling physical inventory audit and software deployment duties with ease. Island's IT team evaluated a number of

replacement technologies, including Microsoft® SMS, Net Support DNA and the Dell KACE Family of Systems Management Appliances. Though Microsoft offered a viable solution, it was too expensive, required an entirely separate server to support the software and called for a considerable amount of hours of training to learn the technology. And while Net Support DNA carried a manageable price at 400 nodes, they found the cost jumped when additional nodes were factored in. The team found Dell KACE offered a significant edge from both a cost savings and deployment standpoint due to its appliance-based approach. After seeing a demonstration of Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance, the hospital knew it was by far the easiest technology to deploy and administer compared to the other offerings they evaluated.

"The thing with Dell KACE is they delivered on all of their promises for the Dell KACE (K1000 Management) Appliance. We were a little skeptical about the speed of deployment and ease-of-use claims, but we had the appliance up and running in literally two hours. I have worked with Microsoft SMS in the past and I know the amount of work that goes into deployment and training of the technology. We knew we didn't have the funds or time for this and needed something that would plug in and begin showing results in hours, not months or weeks," Coryell says.

Within minutes of deployment, Island's Dell KACE Management Appliance began tracking physical and software assets, detailing all of the software and applications running on each of the hospital's 500 computers. The IT team was able to get a quick understating of how many computers in the network needed to be upgraded from Windows 2000 to Windows XP, a number much larger than they ever suspected.

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65% faster inventory and audit processes

The K1000 Management Appliance also immediately started sending agents to every computer to collect inventory and software licensing information. The Dell KACE inventory and audit features proved to be 65 percent faster than processes and tools used to manage this data in the past.

Aside from the thousands of dollars in savings from using the appliance for this important management task, the extra time allowed Coryell and his fellow IT teammates to focus on projects meant to better improve patient care at the hospital.

Software deployment times were yet another significant time and money saver using the Dell KACE Appliance. One project required that the IT team upgrade the time-keeping systems for employees on all 500 computers spread throughout the hospital. Using the former 'piecemeal' manner of

deploying updates and software upgrades this project would have taken weeks. With the appliances, the upgrade took only two days. In all, Steve estimates Island saves 800 hours per year utilizing the appliance to manage its software deployment tasks, leading to over \$17,000 in savings.

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