

Lake-Sumter Emergency Medical Services responds faster to emergencies with Dell KACE



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Jim Root, CIO, Lake-Sumter EMS



Customer Profile

Industry:	Healthcare
Country:	United States
Employees:	260
Web:	www.lakesumterems.org

Business Need

Multiple regional networks, a remote workforce and the top-notch priority of instant service put a strain on the IT team. The large number of sites made management of systems especially challenging as critical tasks, such as asset management, computer imaging and software distribution, required on-site visits. As a result, IT staff had to spend a significant amount of wasted time traveling to various locations to deal "hands-on" with problems.

Solution

The IT team decided to bring in the Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance to manage its desktop tasks and the Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance for image provisioning duties.

Save Time.

Save Your Organization Money.

- 3-month ROI on combined investment of the Dell KACE Management and Deployment Appliances
- Almost 400% ROI in one year
- More than \$120,000 in productivity gains from using the Dell KACE Management Appliance
- Over 2,400 hours saved per year on desktop management tasks
- 50% savings of time spent on imaging using the Dell KACE Deployment Appliance over previous methods
- Less than 5-month ROI
- \$38,000 savings in software distribution in the first year
- 50% savings of time spent managing IT inventory

On October 1, 2000, Lake-Sumter EMS, Inc. began operations as a unique, government-owned, bi-county corporation. The organization was a result of a mandate to provide efficient, cost-effective emergency medical service and transportation of the sick and injured citizens and visitors of Lake and Sumter counties in Florida. Since then, residents in the area have come to rely on Lake-Sumter's services as the sole ambulance provider for the two counties in central Florida. The counties' area is vast and is growing quickly with a 69 percent population increase since 1990.

"What the Dell KACE Management and Deployment Appliances do is take complex tasks and boil them down to seamless efforts. We save a tremendous amount of time on IT tasks thanks to our appliances and it's a wonderful thing."

Jim Root, CIO, Lake-Sumter EMS

Lake-Sumter EMS was named 2008 EMS Service of the Year by the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians and also 2008 EMS Provider of the Year by the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services. The five-person IT support staff for the award-winning ambulance provider is charged with managing the technology needs of a workforce of over 260 employees.

Too much time dealing "hands-on" with problems

The IT layout for Lake-Sumter EMS is complex as the majority of the workforce is mobile and spread out among the 28 remote emergency stations located across both Lake and Sumter Counties. Technology is critical to keeping the emergency care provider's service up and running at all times, ensuring top-of-the-line patient care. Multiple regional networks, a remote workforce and the top-notch priority of instant service put a strain on the IT team. The large number of sites made management of systems especially challenging as critical tasks, such as asset management, computer imaging and software distribution, required on-site visits. As a result, IT staff had to spend a significant amount of wasted time traveling to various locations to deal "hands-on" with problems.

In addition, Lake-Sumter's inventory and audit management processes were outdated. The method used to gather the information included pooling multiple tools to do the job. And finally, the team was forced to rely on manual Excel spreadsheets to track expensive inventory assets, which took too much time and left too much room for error.

"At the end of the day, we are seen as the sole providers of a critical service to our community so it's important that we operate in an efficient, high-level manner," said Jim Root, CIO, Lake-Sumter EMS. "We service thousands of people throughout the year and there really is only a small degree of separation between us and our patients. Technology helps bridge that gap and allows us to provide the high level of patient care the public deserves."

Provisioning solutions did not work well

Prior to deployment of the Dell KACE Management and Deployment

Technology at Work

Solutions

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance

Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance

Appliances, Lake-Sumter EMS' IT staff explored a variety of alternate technologies to handle its diverse needs. Norton Ghost, IBM Tivoli and manual slipstreaming processes were all considered for desktop imaging.

The staff used Norton Ghost for imaging its 180+ personal computers on the network. The IT team found Ghost too cumbersome, complex and slow. In addition, Ghost sometimes slowed the entire network. What's more, Ghost required a re-creation of each image and new hardware and software each time. The technology could not provide a scripting capability, so a new unique script was necessary every time and this took extra time.

Norton Ghost turned out to be such a problem the team resolved to manual slipstream methods instead to push out critical software updates, patches and service packs.

This process worked well enough, but was extremely time-consuming given the manual work required. This was especially apparent when the IT team had to manually provision over 80 personal computers on a regular basis. Keeping the Ghost images up to date proved to be time consuming as well, as it took an additional 200 hours per year to maintain.

"Simply put, our past solutions just did not work well. We tried Ghost, slipstreaming and even thought about bringing in IBM Tivoli. None were a fit: Ghost was too cumbersome, slipstreaming was too antiquated, and Tivoli too expensive. We saw a webinar highlighting the Dell KACE Appliance and decided to give them a call to see if their product could back up the claims from the webinar," Root says.

Easy-to-use management appliance offering quick ROI

Lake-Sumter EMS' IT team sought out another solution to help solve its on-going technical challenges. The team

decided to bring in the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance to manage its desktop tasks and the Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance for image provisioning duties. One of the leading factors in deciding to go with KACE: Lake-Sumter EMS expected to receive full return on investment from its purchase in just six months—they ended up achieving ROI in three.

"We were using separate tools, it seemed, for just about every IT management task that we did prior to the Dell KACE Appliances. We took a look at other solutions and they were both too expensive and tough to maintain for our needs. To see what the Dell KACE Management Appliance could do right out of the box blew us away," Root says.

The initial benefit the IT team saw with its Dell KACE Appliances was almost instant inventory and audit assistance. In the past, the team used multiple software packages including Numara's TrackIt, Script Logic and manual Excel spreadsheets. Though the multiple-package route worked, it was convoluted and took far too much time. Immediately after plugging in the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance, agents were automatically sent across the network and began sending asset inventory information. Root estimates his team saves 50 percent of the time spent managing their physical inventory and audit with the Dell KACE Appliance than with previous methods and tools. The team also liked that one, integrated tool did more than what three others in the past had done.

Like most cash-strapped businesses today, cost savings were also a high priority for Lake-Sumter EMS. Ongoing IT budgets cuts forced the small team to make the best of its time and dollars spent. This meant the team needed to "do more with less" with the technology assets they owned. Using the K1000 Management Appliance for remote

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software distribution was one area the team saved significant time and money. The team saved over \$38,000 and 900 hours the first year alone using its the Dell KACE Management Appliance for software distribution. Much of the savings stemmed from the fact the IT team was not forced to drive to remote sites to upload software and security patch upgrades and instead were able to quickly push out software from their main IT data center.

Recently, the Lake-Sumter IT team started rolling out the Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance to better manage its imaging capabilities. Currently, they have 19 images on file

and are able to image one machine per hour, which would have taken 10 to 15 times longer with another solution. Root estimates his team overall is able to do twice the amount of imaging using the Dell KACE Deployment Appliance compared to what was used in the past. He estimates an even greater number of machines to be imaged per hour with the appliance in the near future.

"What the appliance does is take complex tasks and boil them down to seamless efforts. We save a tremendous amount of time on IT tasks thanks to our Dell KACE Appliances and it's a wonderful thing," Jim concluded.



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