

The Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance saves time, money and space for Maui County



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Carmela Ho, Computer Systems Support Technician, Maui County

Customer Profile

Industry:	Government
Country:	United States
Web:	www.co.maui.hi.us

Business Need

The County of Maui IT Department had several challenges due to a complex mixture of systems management tools and virtual machines and also due to the fact that the network and user environments are spread across multiple islands. Inventory was one of the biggest challenges and in many cases this information was tracked manually.

Solution

Maui County deployed the Dell KACE™ VK1000 Virtual Management Appliance to manage its systems management tasks. The fact that the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance did not require any additional hardware was significant and a leading differentiator from the other solutions the team evaluated. The Virtual Management Appliance also proved to be incredibly easy-to-use, another key factor that other solutions couldn't match.



Save Time. Save Your Organization Money.

- More than \$230,000 saved in first year
- More than 1,200 hours per year saved on software configuration management
- Almost 800 hours per year saved on software distribution
- 2-month ROI
- More than 3,000 hours saved per year in IT administration
- Allows the IT department to save space by using a virtual appliance
- Began tracking software and hardware assets in 30 minutes
- Ability to automatically track physical inventory and audit

Encompassing the islands of Maui, Kahoolawe, Lanai, and also Molokai, Maui County is the largest of the five counties that make up the state of Hawaii. Like Hawaii's other four counties, Maui County enjoys a fair amount of independence from the state when it comes to governing and education. This, consequently, creates additional dependence on the County of Maui's IT infrastructure to adequately manage and run the systems that power important county services for the County of Maui's citizens.

"The Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance has delivered on all promises and saves us a tremendous amount of time, money and also space—all three exceptionally important aspects of systems management to us."

Carmela Ho, Computer Systems Support Technician, Maui County

The Management Information Systems (MIS) Division serves as the central information technology agency for Maui County. The division assists all county-wide departments and agencies in the use of computer technology to achieve their specific goals and objectives, and supports approximately 1,300 users. The division's IT team is made up of seven technicians, 17 analysts, two clerks and one manager. The team is responsible for managing more than 1,000 PCs, 50 application and network servers, and more than a dozen core applications. In addition, the team maintains a comprehensive infrastructure of LANs and WANs which reaches across Maui, Molokai and Lanai, and connects to information systems on Oahu and the mainland. The MIS Division previously relied on multiple tools and virtualized machines to run critical systems management tasks. To say the least, the IT infrastructure was quite complex.

"Our IT infrastructure had several challenges due to its complexity and also due to the fact that it is spread across multiple islands," says Carmela Ho, computer systems support technician for Maui County. "One of our biggest desktop management challenges, however, was trying to keep our inventory straight and knowing who had what and where. We relied on a few different technologies to track our

important hardware and software assets, and in many cases we even tracked this information manually."

Needing A Better Asset Management And Service Desk Solution

Prior to the deployment of the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance, the MIS team had difficulty keeping accurate track of their hardware and software inventory, including virtual machines. Further, the team needed better data detailing what systems they were using and what software was running on each system. With total hardware assets within the division valued at almost one million dollars, tracking how and where each was being used were critical. The team previously used FrontRange asset tracker to handle this function, but due to its complexity it wasn't a good fit so they decided to look elsewhere.

Technology at Work

Training

Dell KACE™ JumpStart Sessions

Solutions

Dell KACE VK1000 Virtual Management Appliance

In addition, Maui County's MIS team relied on a manual service desk ticketing process to manage incident resolution for its 1,300 users, making it overly complex. As a result, configuration issues—stemming from Maui County's disparate hardware environment—hampered employee productivity and caused excessive computer downtime.

"Almost half of our IT staff's time was spent sorting and triaging service desk tickets in the queue before being able to chase down the equipment, the problem and possible resolution," says Ho. "This extremely time- and labor-intensive method just wasn't acceptable."

Easy-To-Use, Space Saving Solution

With their myriad of systems management solutions not performing as expected, Maui County moved forward to deploy the Dell KACE VK1000 Virtual Management Appliance to manage its systems management tasks. The decision was based on a few different factors. Because the county already had a mature virtualization infrastructure in place and many virtual applications already up and running on the network, the VK1000 Virtual Management Appliance stood out among competing solutions because the technology would be able to offer immediate benefit. Further, saving space was an important factor. The fact that the Virtual Management Appliance did not require any additional hardware was significant and another leading differentiator from the other solutions the team evaluated. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Virtual Management Appliance proved to be incredibly easy to use, another key factor that other solutions couldn't match.

Cost and ROI were also both huge factors in the County of Maui's decision to go with the Virtual Management

Appliance over competing technologies. The Dell KACE appliance not only offered the best-priced solution for its technology, but it also offered the best value and later proved this.

The county deployed the appliance in about 8 hours and soon began scanning the more than 1,000 computers on the network, offering detailed lists of installed software, the processes running on each system and where each computer was physically located.

"Other solutions that we looked at required manual input of the systems running on our 1,300 computers, which would have been a daunting task to say the least. After downloading the software onto our system and going through minimal set-up tasks, the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance immediately began tracking our assets. This was important because the FrontRange Asset Tracker tool we used prior was quite complicated to get online. Also the Dell KACE JumpStart sessions with Dell KACE System Engineers were extremely helpful and helped get us up and running quickly. This was our first look into the excellent customer service we have come to enjoy since day one," Ho says.

\$90,000 Savings To Service Desk

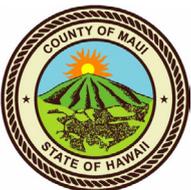
Ho and the MIS team saw immediate benefits from the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance's software distribution capabilities. This function allows the team to push out software to numerous machines at one time. Installation and distribution of any application, service pack, update, or digital asset to desktops and servers and pre-defined "filters" can be set to allow almost unlimited control over machine updates. The Virtual Management Appliance also integrates with real-time Active Directory® for ease of distribution management.

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The service desk also played a key role in County of Maui's selection of Dell KACE. The service desk is based off SQL and after a little onsite training, helps administrators to easily configure process-based rules to govern the flow of tickets. Tickets are completely customizable, searchable and sortable. The ticket queue the Maui team is using can be pre-defined based on skill sets, and other parameters such as location, which is very important to Maui County because of the physical challenge of being spread among multiple islands. The Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance also tracks the ongoing process, including reporting changes in ticket status to appropriate parties. The service desk helped reduce user downtime with an annual benefit totaling almost \$90,000.

"One of the biggest advantages of the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance is the fact that we didn't have to purchase other hardware or software. The cost of software-only offers from other vendors was at least twice as much as the Dell KACE Virtual Management Appliance," Ho adds. "Dell KACE offered us a simple download and we were up and running. We have also noticed the Virtual Management Appliance can be easily moved to another virtual machine, if needed, with little disruption to the network. The Virtual Management Appliance has delivered on all promises and saves us a tremendous amount of time, money and also space—all three exceptionally important aspects of systems management to us."



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