

The Dell KACE Management Appliance aces systems management test for large Colorado school district



“Right off the bat, our Dell KACE Appliance dramatically improved the management of our large and diverse IT environment, enabling our IT team to focus on more strategic projects.”

*Shelley Kooser, CIO,
Academy School District 20*

Customer Profile

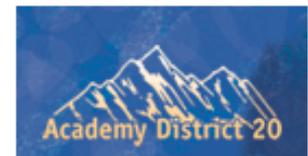
Industry:	Education
Country:	United States
Students:	22,000
Web:	www.asd20.org

Business Need

License tracking and service desk processes were unable to keep pace and properly manage the fast-growing district's evolving systems. The IT team was forced to rely on ineffective home grown systems and processes to manage important desktop management tasks. The large computer system environment led to growing problems with critical day-to-day PC lifecycle tasks.

Solution

The IT team decided to go with the Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance to manage the district's 8,000 computer systems network. The appliance was selected for its ease-of-use, low cost point and ease-of-deployment, and the fact that the appliance seamlessly scaled to manage the district's large number of computer endpoints.



Save Time.

Save Your Organization Money.

- 15,238 hours saved annually by IT department
- Saved over 7,000 hours annually spent on configuration management
- 75% reduction in time spent on inventory and audit, more than 1,771 in total hours
- ROI in less than one year
- \$65,000 saved in service desk costs
- 50% reduction in end user downtime
- Dell KACE Appliance seamlessly scaled to manage the district's 8,000 endpoints

Academy School District 20, located at the foot of the Rockies in beautiful Colorado Springs, has a history that dates back to a time of log schoolhouses on the wild western frontier. Fast forward to the present, as the large District 20 is represented by five high schools, five middle schools and eighteen elementary schools utilizing a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade level configuration and totaling 22,000 students. Every school has an up-to-date library, media and computer center and the district prides itself in continually redefining its technology programs to give students the latest in technological education.

“We estimate purchasing the Dell KACE Management Appliance has saved our department thousands of hours spent on maintenance tasks, leading to impressive dollar savings the first year alone.”

*Shelley Kooser, CIO,
Academy School District 20*

Colorado Springs is a fast-growing city. District 20 found itself, and the number of students it serves, growing at a healthy clip as well. The IT staff, in charge of managing 30 servers and over 8,000 computer end-nodes, realized license tracking and service desk processes were unable to keep pace and properly manage the district's evolving systems with any degree of success. Tasks that were once reasonable had become major hurdles due to the fast growth. District 20's IT team was forced to rely on ineffective home grown systems and processes to manage its important desktop management tasks, and they by no means received a passing grade. The large computer system environment led to growing problems with critical day-to-day PC lifecycle tasks.

District's Scale Made "Inventory A Nightmare"

The physical layout of District 20's IT systems was a contributing issue. The large IT infrastructure and the complexity of centrally managing 28 remote sites made several critical IT maintenance tasks difficult to accomplish. Inventory management, for example, became a difficult and time-consuming task, primarily managed using hand-written lists or hard-to-keep-current spreadsheets.

The team's reliance on these home grown spreadsheets required frequent on-site visits to each school to perform manual inputs of physical hardware and software updates. The district also had a mixed operating system environment running both Windows® and Apple Mac OS X.

Even though point solutions were adequate in some cases, getting them to work across Windows and Mac systems was difficult. The team sent software and patch updates out to all district-wide computer end-points, but the Mac stations wouldn't automatically confirm the updates were received. This meant the IT team was forced to run additional tests to make sure all updates were indeed received. According to Shelley Kooser, CIO of Academy School District 20, the manual method of inventory management accounted for at least one quarter of the time the IT team spent on all management tasks and did not yield quality results.

Technology at Work

Solutions

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliance

"Instead of each of our 30-member IT team using their unique strengths and focusing on their niche IT role, staff spent time manually tackling menial maintenance tasks such as finding, tracking and reporting on software running on each of the 8,000 computers under management. Frankly inventory was a nightmare prior to using the Dell KACE Management Appliances," Kooser explains.

Quick To Deploy Solution

District 20's IT team began its technology replacement process by evaluating several of the leading vendors and solutions in the systems management space, including Microsoft® SMS and Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliances.

The IT team sought a cost-effective solution, one that could work with the existing infrastructure but that didn't require extensive training. After a thorough evaluation of all the available options, Kooser and her team decided to go with the Dell KACE K1000 Management Appliance to manage the district's 8,000 computer systems network. The Dell KACE Appliance was selected for its ease-of-use, low cost point and ease-of-deployment and the fact that the appliance seamlessly scaled to manage District 20's large number of computer end-points. In fact, the appliance deployed and was sending back actionable data in less than one week, quite a feat for such a large, distributed environment. The decision paid off almost immediately as the number of IT personnel needed to run critical desktop management tasks dropped from 30 to five employees.

"Right off the bat our Dell KACE Management Appliance dramatically improved the management of our large and diverse IT environment, enabling our IT team to focus on more strategic projects," Kooser says. "Upon deployment, our Dell KACE

Management Appliance immediately sent clients to our end-points and reported the software and hardware inventory for our entire network. I'd estimate we now save 75 percent of the time it used to take to track inventory using the Dell KACE Appliance. In addition, we cut out 65 days worth of on-site travel which was required in the past for IT support, which included inventory management."

Dell KACE Scores An "A+" With Service Desk

Kooser estimates that service desk management ate up 45 percent of the team's total time prior to the Dell KACE K1000 Appliance. Using service desk, the team saved 5,670 hours annually leading to a staggering \$65,205 in savings. One reason is that the Dell KACE Appliance provides an intuitive, integrated solution that replaces the previous "siloes" approach.

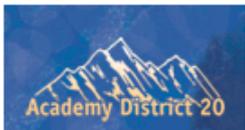
Prior to the appliance, end-users had no true visibility into processes governing service desk management so all activity was maintained on the IT side. Tasks such as trouble ticket management, for instance, took far too much of the IT department's time. The Dell KACE Appliance makes it easy for users to submit support requests by email or through the self-service user portal, so the team can log requests in seconds as opposed to taking minutes to do so over the phone. What's more, the innovative Dell KACE self-service software portal allows end-users, such as teachers, to access a flexible knowledge base, see hardware and software inventory information, install IT controlled software packages and raise and view support requests. Users are now able to take on easy maintenance tasks themselves. This means IT is not tethered to the phone, and team members are free to complete other important service desk tasks more quickly.

"Our Dell KACE Management Appliance has surprised us not only with its simplicity and ease-of-use, but also the breadth of management capabilities it offers. The technology has helped us to improve and accelerate our overall desktop management operation."

*Shelley Kooser, CIO,
Academy School District 20*

"Our Dell KACE Management Appliance has surprised us not only with its simplicity and ease-of-use, but also the breadth of management capabilities it offers," says Kooser. "The technology has helped us to improve and accelerate our overall desktop management operation. We estimate purchasing the Dell KACE Appliance

has saved our department thousands of hours spent on maintenance tasks leading to impressive dollar savings the first year alone. As we take advantage of some of the other capabilities that the appliance has to offer, such as patching, for instance, I envision the cost savings will increase even more in the years to come."



View all Dell case studies at: dell.com/casestudies

Availability and terms of Dell Services vary by region. For more information, visit: dell.com/servicesdescriptions
© March 2011. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. This case study is for informational purposes only. DELL MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS CASE STUDY. Reference number: 10008921

