

Case Study

Organization:

Large, multi-practice law firm

Industry:

Legal

Large, Multi-Practice Law Firm Switches to New Boundary Technologies, Eliminates Excessive Overhead Costs and Streamlines PC Configuration Management

Profile: Expanding, multi-practice law firm with more than 450 attorneys in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta.

Situation: Firm's previous PC configuration management solution had excessive overhead costs; lacked quick and simple software deployment and asset management tools; needed effective means of patching bug-prone document management software.

Solution: Firm uses Prism Suite® as its PC configuration management solution, utilizing the Suite's Prism Deploy®, Prism Asset Manager® and Prism Patch Manager® modules.

ROI: Reduced network administration time and costs; frees administrator to focus on higher-level responsibilities and activities.

Describing New Boundary Technologies:

Reliable, Easy, Essential

Out of Control

With more than 450 attorneys and offices in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, the firm is growing. Its practice areas include communications, litigation, and mergers and acquisitions, as well as First Amendment, government relations, new technologies, intellectual property and numerous others.

The firm was "getting by" with Novell's® ZENWorks® for PC configuration management, but it ultimately sought a solution that had lower overhead costs. When the firm began planning a system-wide upgrade to Windows XP recently, the time was right to switch to a simpler, easier-to-use software deployment and asset management solution that would completely automate PC configuration from start-to-finish, as well as provide the firm patch management capabilities and a more reliable reporting function.

The firm also needed a configuration tool that worked better with and could easily manage updates and patches associated with its Interwoven document management software. "Though Interwoven is the preferred choice of most law firms, it tends to require an above-average amount of administrative handholding," said the firm's Manager of Desktop Computers.

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Additionally, “The new PC configuration solution had to meet three key criteria for us: It had to be able to deploy software readily and quickly; provide proof from each client that the software did deploy, and contain asset management capabilities that let us know what people had in order to make license management more straightforward.”

The firm assessed all the top deployment and asset management vendors and products, including solutions from Altiris and BMC. “But when we reviewed New Boundary Technology’s Prism Suite — with Prism Deploy, Prism Asset Manager and Prism Patch Manager modules —we knew that’s what we wanted,” he said.

Experiencing Control

Implementation of Prism Suite on the firm’s network was easy and quick. Turnaround time from installation to usage and results took little more than a day, and the firm’s Manager of Desktop Computers had it fine-tuned within a week. “The snapshotting feature of Prism Suite and Prism Deploy, which facilitates scripting, made software deployment very slick,” he said.

Regarding the second criterion, proof of deployment, Prism Suite’s dynamic reporting engine lets the firm automatically receive real-time insight into its managed systems.

Prism Suite also met the firm’s asset management criterion. “Prism Asset Manager makes it easy to see what people have on their computers. If the need arose, I could readily integrate Prism Suite with our Active Directory.”

Prism Patch Manager gives the firm a quick, efficient way of dealing with any bugs and patch problems in the network, including those presented by its document

management software. “If someone comes to me and says, ‘Interwoven has released a new patch and it’s got a particular bug,’ I can ascertain who in our network had what version of Interwoven and say ‘OK,’ all the people on this patch, and Prism Patch Manager will upgrade the appropriate people in short order,” he notes.

The firm’s experience with Prism Suite and Interwoven proved very useful for a network administrator at another law firm, who had contacted the firm’s Manager of Desktop Computers about his difficulty determining which version of Interwoven software his firm was running. “I shared with my contact what our script was, and how he could report on it quickly by using Prism Suite. He implemented it, and was blown away by how well it worked. Prism Suite introduced his firm to what they could control within their network environment, and how quickly and easily they could do it.”

“There may be some IT administrators who are under the impression that Prism Suite’s modules are best suited for smaller network environments, but our firm’s experience with it clearly shows that they are great for any size network,” said the firm’s Manager of Desktop Computers.

During a recent swap-out of anti-virus software, the firm discovered a significant problem when the software deployed.

“When first-time users logged in on some of the workstations, doing so would generate an error. We started over, using Prism Suite to deploy the new software to all the workstations in one fell swoop in the middle of the night, to a hundred users. It worked so well that we didn’t get a single bug-related call.”

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Even More Control

Where the firm really leverages Prism Suite is in its configuration groups. "It's huge in regard to these groups, because it's simple and straightforward," said the firm's Manager of Desktop Computers. He noted that offsite users pose no problems for Prism Suite; when they connect to the firm's network, Prism Suite detects their presence, its script kicks in and any needed updates are applied.

Prism Suite also has what the firm's Manager of Desktop Computers regards as a bonus feature: It enables users to edit a tools menu.

"For example, when users do a right click, they can write a script that says: 'I want to ping a certain computer.' We

can build whatever tools into Prism Suite that we want on a particular workstation, and have one-click functionality, rather than the default setup, which requires multiple clicks."

He notes that the firm is considering a green initiative, and likes the idea of deploying New Boundary Technologies' PwrSmart, which groups and administers PC power management settings to computer configurations with similar power management requirements — thereby freeing up IT staff, reducing energy costs and extending the life of IT assets.

"Three words come to mind when I think of New Boundary and its Prism Suite. Reliable, easy and essential. There are few network administration products that perform as advertised, but Prism Suite is definitely an exception."

– Firm's Manager of Desktop Computers.

"Three words come to mind when I think of New Boundary and its Prism Suite. Reliable, easy...and essential. There are few network administration products that perform as advertised, but Prism Suite is definitely an exception. It does what it needs to do, and does it very well. As for tech support, there

hasn't been too many times over the years that I've needed to call New Boundary. But when I do, the support is excellent and highly responsive; there's always someone available to effectively answer my questions."

For him, what it all boils down to is that Prism Suite frees him up to deal with more higher-level job demands. "One great example is that I can have the firm's help desk staff perform software assignments and deployments, with no

worries. With Prism Suite, I know I can set the parameters and the technology will take care of the rest."

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