SHARP®

San Diego's Health Care Leader ™

BUSINESS NEEDS

- Implement a cost-effective, Windows-based software deployment solution that can manage and deploy software to 10,000 geographically distributed PCs.

- Maximize the value of the solution investment by taking advantage of technical mentoring, dedicated support, and on-site assistance.

SOLUTION

- Ivanti® Unified Endpoint Manager
- Ivanti® Technical Account Manager Program

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- For software deployment to 10,000 PCs, lowered the required hardware investment from 10 servers to two servers

- Enjoyed faster customer response to technical issues regarding use of the software deployment and management solution

- Leveraged technical mentoring, on-site visits, and training to increase its overall knowledge and expertise of the solution

- Provided the ability to handle twice as many trouble tickets in a day through the solution's remote control capabilities

- Aided in ensuring software licensing compliance in order to avoid associated fines and penalties

- Self-provisioned on the AWS EC2

Sharp HealthCare

Delivering High-Quality IT Care and Service

Consistently ranked as the No. 1 integrated healthcare system in Southern California by Modern Healthcare, Sharp HealthCare is San Diego's most comprehensive healthcare delivery system. It is recognized for clinical excellence for services in cardiac, cancer, and multi-organ transplantation, as well as orthopedics, rehabilitation, behavioral health and women's health. The Sharp system, which was a Gold-level recipient in the 2006 California Awards for Performance Excellence program, includes four acute-care hospitals, three specialty hospitals, three affiliated medical groups and a health plan.

To ensure that its hospitals and affiliated medical groups can deliver the high level of healthcare services that its customers and patients have come to expect, Sharp relies on the software delivery and systems management capabilities of Ivanti® Management Suite to keep its 10,000 PCs healthy and properly equipped.

Software Deployment; Lower Hardware Costs

A little more than five years ago when Sharp decided to transition its IT environment to all Microsoft servers, the healthcare provider realized that it would also need to invest in a new software deployment system for its new environment. Since it was becoming a Microsoft shop, the organization initially assumed that leveraging Microsoft SMS for its software distribution efforts would be the best choice. However, after discovering the significant hardware investment required for SMS, as well hearing endorsements from other large enterprises concerning Ivanti® Management Suite and reading glowing analyst reports on the Ivanti® solution, the CIO at Sharp put the brakes on its SMS deployment.

"We were taken aback by the amount of hardware we were going to have to invest to implement SMS," says Mark Weiss, senior systems analyst at Sharp. "If we went with SMS, to support the 10,000 PCs distributed among our five major locations and 35 satellite office buildings we would have had to invest in 10 new servers. The fact that Ivanti required only two servers and would be easy to implement in our environment made it a no-brainer."

Weiss attributes the solution's targeted multicast features as the reason why Ivanti Management Suite can support such a large and geographically distributed infrastructure with so little hardware. "Being able to support 10,000 PCs with just a single SQL server and Ivanti® core server is a really awesome feat," Weiss says. "No other solution can really touch that and the main reason is the use of multicasting in Ivanti."

With targeted multicasting, individual PCs in Sharp's remote offices can become temporary site servers that can push out application installs to all the other PCs on those remote subnets. As a result, when Sharp does a 100MB application upgrade, that upgrade only has to cross its WAN link once to the remote PCs acting as temporary site servers.

To make sure it could take full advantage of its investment in Ivanti Management Suite, Sharp invested in the Ivanti® Technical Account Manager (TAM) program as well.

The Ivanti TAM program gives Ivanti customers a single point of contact for all their support needs. Since each account manager is only committed to a few accounts, participants in the program are able to enjoy dedicated and personalized support that includes direct access to their manager without waiting in a hold queue.

"With the TAM program, we always enjoy high quality support," Weiss says. "Since our account manager is dedicated to only a few companies and not working a general support line, we always get faster response. We're never put in queue and made to wait. They're always available when we call and willing to spend the time we need with them."

The TAM program offers various levels of service, making it flexible enough to meet the various needs of different organizations. When Sharp first signed up for TAM, it chose to participate in one of the program's highest levels in order to take advantage of the technical mentoring, yearly site visits, and additional training offered. "Our knowledge of Ivanti has grown immensely and become quite in-depth as a result of the personalized support and contact provided by TAM," Weiss says. "For someone who is just getting their feet wet with Ivanti, the TAM program helps immensely with the learning curve, especially in terms of understanding better how the solution works and troubleshooting issues."

Sharp has leveraged its TAM relationship to also learn how to best leverage Ivanti® Management Suite in the areas of remote control, patch management, and software license monitoring. "We have a number of different groups in our IT department that utilize Ivanti remote control heavily," Weiss says. "It enables our analysts to handle twice as many trouble tickets in a day than they normally could."

In regards to software license monitoring, Weiss adds, "Ivanti gives us a true number of how many people are actually using a particular piece of software. That's very important to us because it helps us make sure we're not under-buying licenses so we can avoid paying heavy fines or penalties."

Initially Sharp figured that over time, as its internal expertise on the different aspects of Ivanti Management Suite grew, it would outgrow the need to participate in the TAM program. Even though its staff's expertise has grown considerably thanks to its TAM participation, Sharp still sees significant value in the program, making it an investment that it plans to continue with for the long term. As a result, the healthcare provider continues to participate in TAM, but at a lower level of the program that provides dedicated support, but does not offer the on-site visits. Plus, the TAM engineer typically has responsibility for a couple more customers.

"We plan on staying with the TAM for the foreseeable future," Weiss says. "When there are problems or issues, by having a TAM we know that we have a voice within the company. We have been really spoiled by the TAM program and its engineers. It keeps us in constant contact with all the right people at Ivanti, and if needed our technical account manager can take our issues up to the Ivanti developers for the right resolutions."

"I like the direction that Ivanti is going," Weiss adds. "By consolidating more of what we need into a single console it gives me one place where I can control application deployment, patch compliance, software licensing, antivirus, etc. We are able to administer more and more pieces of the environment in a more manageable manner."

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— Mark Weiss
Senior Systems Analyst
Sharp Healthcare

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