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Adventist Health

Adventist Health Saves in Software License Costs and Reduces Standard Applications in Use from Over 6,500 to 500

Challenge

Adventist Health needed to centralize, standardize, and automate endpoint management of 22,500 devices in 19 hospitals in the western United States.

Solution

The company deployed Symantec Client Management Suite because of its third-party patch management and extensive device management capabilities.

Benefits

- Significant reduction in software licensing costs by reducing applications in use from 6,500 to 500, enabled by consolidating software versioning and standardizing user applications

- Near 100% IT inventory accuracy up from 75%, increasing budget efficiency

- 97% patch compliance, improved from 80%, boosting uptime

Symantec National and Platinum Partner

ITS Partners – itsdelivers.com

Client Profile

Site: adventisthealth.org
Industry: Healthcare
Headquarters: Roseville, California
Employees: 28,600

Adventist Health

To streamline endpoint management in 19 separate hospitals, Adventist Health turned to Symantec and ITS Partners, a Symantec Platinum Partner, for a solution. Results include the ability to manage 18,000 devices across all locations from a single central console, enterprise-wide rollouts that require up to 50% less staff time, and near-100% patch compliance and inventory accuracy.

Making One Out of Many

Large organizations often grow by acquiring smaller organizations—sometimes many of them. IT leaders then face a major challenge: how to centralize endpoint management? Adventist Health, for instance, owns 19 hospitals throughout California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. It has 22,500 desktops, laptops, and thin clients to manage, and each hospital was taking care of its own endpoints, with its own technicians, policies, and management tools.

Hospitals are hesitant to change procedures that are tested and familiar because health outcomes are on the line, and services need to be available 24×7. If endpoint administration was going to be centralized, it had to be done with minimal disruption.

Centralization would also help achieve other goals. "Healthcare is going through a massive amount of reform right now," explains Don Courville, chief technology officer at Adventist Health. "We need economies of scale and optimized management to drive healthcare to a better value and meet the tenets of the Affordable Care Act and Meaningful Use." (Meaningful Use standards motivate the deployment of electronic health record (EHR) technology to improve quality, safety, and efficiency.)

A Critical Step

At Adventist Health, the IT team sought an endpoint management solution that would unify, automate and standardize endpoint administration. It would represent more than a technical, back-office change. "This project affects users, and the way they receive services, whether they're on the business or the clinical side, so we needed the right kind of guidance," Courville says.

> **"I wouldn't do this type of implementation without a partner like ITS. ITS was able to walk us through many pitfalls in advance that we might have fallen into otherwise. We would not have been as successful as we were without them."**
>
> – Victor Polston, Director of Technology, Adventist Health

The team evaluated endpoint management solutions from many vendors and chose Symantec Client Management Suite. One reason was the breadth of third-party software that the Symantec solution can manage and patch. "We plan to use it to patch as many as six third-party applications," says Victor Polston, director of technology at Adventist Health. Another reason was more advanced capabilities in inventory management. With the solution in place, many benefits have resulted.

Deploying New Services Much Faster

Says Courville: "With Symantec Client Management Suite, we are able to divert more of our attention away from endpoint administration to getting new products and applications in the hands of clinicians and business people. We can do major projects more quickly and cost-effectively than we have in the past."

For example, Adventist Health used the solution to migrate endpoints from Windows XP to Windows 7 in 40 weeks, using about 200 days of staff time. That is less than half the time required by a similar project, deploying a computerized physician order entry (CPOE) application, that was completed before Symantec Client Management was in use. The CPOE deployment required about 420 staff days, and 20% more end-to-end time.

Cost Savings in Software Licensing

Inventory management is also much easier because Adventist Health deployed Symantec Client Management Suite. "In our prior environment, we had 19 separate locations and management systems, and trying to determine how many copies we were using of a given application was near to impossible," Polston says.

Greater visibility and control has helped simplify the application inventory. "Adventist Health had 6,500 applications; using Symantec Client Management Suite, we've been able to get that down to 500," says Polston. "In the past, we had everything from Office 97 to Office 2010. Now 98% of users have Office 2013. We're able to keep licensing and versioning much tighter. Our overall software licensing savings is significant."

Accurate Device Inventory in Minutes Not Days

In the past, it was also challenging to know which devices were going out of warranty and needed to be replaced. "Each site had its own way of taking inventory, and there was a lot of manual 'sneakernet' work to validate results," Polston explains. "We had about 75% accuracy in our device inventory. Today, we pull an inventory report biweekly and know we have near 100% accuracy. We can use the tool to forecast what we need to purchase, gaining greater budget efficiency."

The team uses Client Management Suite to track device serial numbers throughout the lifecycle from purchase to disposal, handing off devices to an asset recovery service. "We never had this kind of visibility before," Polston says. "It's very helpful in enabling more informed decisions and planning."

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Boosting Patch Compliance from 80% to 97%

The IT team can now pre-schedule and automate the task of patching over 18,000 devices, and patch compliance has risen to 97% from 80%. "This reduces issues and makes our end user environment more secure," Polston notes.

Patch management once took 25% of an employee's time at each of the 19 locations. Now, it takes just 25% of one employee's time to patch the entire enterprise remotely from a central console. Says Polston: "Client Management Suite has freed the equivalent of more than four IT members of our IT staff from patching, enabling them to do higher value work."

Reducing about 40 Base Images to One

Image management has also been streamlined. In the prior environment, each of the 19 locations had their own image for PCs and laptops. The IT team has used Symantec Client Management Suite to reduce about 40 base PC/laptop images across the enterprise to just one.

Saving User Time

When users have an issue with their devices, the IT team re-images them in a fraction of the time it would take to troubleshoot. And new devices are deployed more quickly. "It takes just six hours from the point of receiving a device in our facility to putting it on the desk of the user, more than twice as fast as the two days it took in the past," says Polston.

Adventist Health IT has an aggressive quarterly image release pattern due to the ease of image building/updating and deployment.

There were several key lessons from the project. One is that patience is required. "It's likely you're not going to get this right the first time," notes Courville. "Some level of iteration will be required. Not too long after the initial go live, we upgraded from version 7.1 to 7.5 of Symantec Client Management Suite because the first time out, we realized some ways we divided duties were not optimal."

ITS Delivers

Another key lesson is that the right help is important. "I wouldn't do this type of implementation without having a Symantec partner like ITS Partners involved," says Polston, speaking of a Symantec National and Platinum Partner that specializes in endpoint management. "ITS was able to help us avoid many pitfalls in advance that we might have fallen into otherwise. We kept them involved for well over a year, even after the initial implementation, and we would not have been as successful as we were without them."

A third key lesson was the importance of a balance between central control and getting input from the field. "You need to be clear on the core principles you are trying to accomplish," says Courville. "If everyone in the field is voting on core principles, you're probably going to fail. However if you're not getting input from the field, then you're probably going to fail as well. The balance between the two continuums is a top tier objective to achieving success in a large enterprise environment."

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The Adventist Health IT team got great input from the field, Polston notes. Three IT systems administrators had prior experience with Symantec Client Management Suite and were especially valuable. "Their manager, Jeffrey Brown helped guide the needed cultural shift in our team, from de-centralized to centralized," Polston explains. "Shawn Mayhew, Sean Denure, and Terrence Balao also contributed their extensive Symantec expertise and helped make the project a success. And it's important to have executive sponsorship like we received from Don Courville."

Support that Pays for Itself

For access to the highest level of Symantec technical support, Adventist Health contracts with Symantec™ Business Critical Services for its Remote Product Specialist offering. This gives the IT team access to a designated, advanced-level Symantec product expert.

Says Polston: "Our team has met with our Symantec Business Critical Services Remote Product Specialist on a biweekly basis over the last two years, and we've taken care of 118 issues, seeing a lot of value. Gary Smith has been very good about reaching out to needed experts within Symantec and solving our challenges. This service has absolutely paid for itself. Gary is quick to get answers to our simple questions, yet focused enough to hang in there with continuous assistance on the very few major issues that we have had."

New projects are now possible that wouldn't have been practical before. "We were able to deploy a screen-saver system-wide to 18,000 devices, almost overnight, enabling the Marketing Department to use as a message board to communicate with our employees," says Polston. "It would have taken weeks in the prior environment."

For Additional Information

Contact your local Symantec Enterprise Division (SED) Sales Representative or Business Partner, or visit:

- Symantec Client Management Suite
- Symantec Business Critical Services—Remote Product Specialist