

McKesson Specialty Health

Effective Endpoint Management Key to Cyber Security Success

Challenge

- Centrally managing thousands of endpoints
- Accommodating users' unique and varying reporting needs
- Working with tight budgets and limited in-house, expert personnel

Solution

- Symantec IT Management Suite 8.5

Benefits

- Enhances companywide security
- Enables employee self-service while preserving administrator control
- Allows users to pull exactly the information they need
- Boosts ITMS and endpoint user productivity
- Cost-effectively manages endpoint ecosystem

Client Profile

Site: mckessonsspecialtyhealth.com

Industry: Healthcare

Headquarters: The Woodlands, Texas

Employees: 5,000+



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Once upon a time, an organization needed only a good virus scan for endpoint protection. But today the endpoint reigns as the top cyber threat vector. Bad actors launch increasingly sophisticated attacks. And cyber criminals create a dizzying array of fake apps masquerading as legitimate, enticing users to install them (without IT approval) so the apps can sneak into your corporate network to exfiltrate sensitive data.

“We used to give administrative rights to anyone with a laptop, let them install whatever they wanted,” said Yashim Greene, endpoint engineer at McKesson Specialty Health. “Now we have to control everything. Endpoint engineering needs to amend it first.”

McKesson Specialty Health manages its endpoint ecosystem with Symantec IT Management Suite (ITMS), which the company uses to securely and efficiently manage software deployment, patching, asset management, and more on desktops, laptops, and servers across all its cloud and on-premises environments. An ITMS customer since 2007, McKesson Specialty Health was initially attracted by the suite's cost-effectiveness and extensive configurability. The company recently upgraded to ITMS 8.5.

ITMS 8.5: A Win for Administrators

Greene and other ITMS administrators at McKesson Specialty Health like how the suite lets them devolve power to other suite users and to IT; doing so frees up a lot of administrative time and reduces the management effort required.

“We give users authority to pull their own reports and apply updates,” said Greene, “but the admins are still in control. For example, we set it up, so users see only a certain set of downloadable apps. It's not a free-for-all.”

Greene also appreciates the instant visibility ITMS 8.5 gives him into endpoint agents—and the ability to see problems and fix them on the fly. “When I install an app on someone's machine I'll check the agent and, if there's something wrong with it, with just a few clicks I can fix it.”

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– Yashim Greene, Endpoint Engineer, McKesson Specialty Health

ITMS 8.5: A Win for Endpoint Users

The new ITMS 8.5 console makes it easy for non-administrative users to take advantage of the suite’s capabilities. “We have only three admins and maybe six or seven power users,” said Greene. “Everyone else just wants to get in and get out. For folks who don’t work with ITMS all day, the new console is a game changer.”

In fact, the modern UI is a principal reason McKesson Specialty Health chose to upgrade.

“ITMS 8.5 makes things a lot simpler—just a really clean, simple, and straightforward interface,” said Greene. “Say you want to give a user an app. Find the user or computer name, pick it, then pick the software icon you want to install. Hit next and you’re done. Super simple to learn. Super simple to use.”

McKesson Specialty Health’s endpoint users also get much faster software rollouts and updates.

“There are times we’ll start testing a software deployment using the console, and before we can even RDP into the machine to see when it’s kicked off, it’s already running,” said Greene. “The constant WebSocket connection is lightning fast.”

Despite its constant connection, ITMS 8.5 is no bandwidth hog. The service gets tapped only on demand—it’s not always looking for something to do—and bandwidth throttling makes sure traffic keeps flowing.

Customer Service Makes for a True Partnership

What keeps McKesson Specialty Health coming back to Symantec ITMS year after year? Customer service tops Greene’s list.

“You cannot buy good customer service; either a company has it or it doesn’t—and Symantec has it,” said Greene. “When I think of Symantec, I think of the people I call when I have an issue. I can give you name after name after name of Symantec support people who’ve helped us out time and again, many times after hours.”

McKesson Specialty Health always gets an annual maintenance contract (either directly with Symantec or through a vendor partner). At least once a year Greene and other ITMS administrators go through the system with Symantec and look for things that can be better configured or optimized.

“It’s really, really important to have a partner who listens and is open to suggestions,” said Greene. “At the end of the day, that’s what we want: A partner who understands our endpoint challenges on a day-to-day basis.”

It helps that Symantec uses ITMS in-house. “Symantec eats their own dogfood,” said Greene. “They’re not just selling us a product; they actually use ITMS 8.5 in-house, managing and securing their environment. Makes a huge difference.”

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Advice for Companies Looking for an Endpoint Management Solution

Greene recommends Symantec ITMS to other companies looking for an endpoint management solution.

- **Does the job.** “ITMS is a very robust tool that can do virtually everything—from patching, delivering software, imaging machines, and keeping track of applications and licenses. If you’ve never used IT analytics, you need to. It’s really cool. You’re definitely getting a great product and great customer service along with it.”
- **Cost-effectiveness.** “Price was one reason we chose Symantec in the beginning, and it’s a big reason we stick with it. Price is always a driving factor for business. The cost-effectiveness is beyond reproach.”
- **Customizability.** “ITMS is a 100% customizable tool. It can produce any type of report for any circumstance and deliver it automatically as needed.”
- **Simplified reporting.** “Reporting, obviously, is a huge thing. With Symantec ITMS, you don’t have to know SQL—although you can write SQL queries inside the product—and you don’t have to know how to write a query. Just click your way through the included SQL builder.”



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