

City of Rochester simplifies software deployment

Quest®

The City of Rochester needed a solution to help their tech team install new software and manage remote devices.



Country: **United States**

Employees: **<1,200**

Industry: **Government**

Website: www.rochestermn.gov

Too much work for only one engineer

In 2004, the City of Rochester, Minnesota had only one tech support engineer, Scott Baxter. It was time to update the organization to a new Microsoft software package, but the thought of manually uninstalling the old version and installing the new software package to each of their 300+ computers daunted Mr. Baxter. He needed a solution to streamline and speed up the process. That's when he discovered KACE by Quest.

About this case study

The City of Rochester, Minnesota had a small IT team and needed a quick and easy way to deploy new software packages to hundreds of computers.

Solution

The IT team turned to the KACE Systems Management Appliance (SMA) to streamline and speed up the process. Instead of the 1.5 months it would take to manually uninstall old software and install the new, it took the City of Rochester less than a week.

Benefits

- Provided automatic software distributions and upgrades
- Enabled remote device maintenance
- Enabled simple imaging of computers
- Provided easy information tracking

Solutions at a glance

- KACE

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Software

- [KACE Systems Management Appliance](#)
- [KACE Systems Deployment Appliance](#)

KACE SMA to the rescue

After performing a search for helpful solutions, Mr. Baxter contacted Quest, conducted a review and fell in love with the KACE Systems Management Appliance (SMA). KACE SMA automatically carries out software distributions and upgrades to Windows, Mac and Linux computers and servers. It provides flexibility for the timing of deployments and which systems are targeted, which helps minimize any disruptions to user productivity. Additionally, KACE SMA is equally adept at uninstalling applications.

Based on these capabilities, Mr. Baxter signed the agreement and quickly put the SMA to work on a software distribution of the new Microsoft product. Before he found KACE SMA, Mr. Baxter did an analysis and had estimated that manually performing the distribution would have taken him at least a month and a half to complete. With the help of KACE SMA, the software deployment was completed in less than a week.

Adding new capabilities with KACE SDA

About 10-12 years after first incorporating KACE SMA, the City welcomed another KACE appliance into their ranks: the KACE Systems Deployment Appliance (SDA). The City brought in KACE SDA to reduce the cost and complexity of endpoint systems imaging, initial installations and provisioning to on-site or remote endpoints. Turns out, they would need both appliances more than Mr. Baxter had originally anticipated.

The pandemic ushers in a rush to support working from home

"Initially, it [the COVID-19 pandemic], beat the crap out of us," said Mr. Baxter. "It was such a sudden thing, and we did not have a large population of laptops

available for users to take home." When the pandemic hit in March 2020, the City of Rochester's devices were nearly evenly split between desktops and laptops. So, when all the organization's employees suddenly needed to work from home, it was a struggle for Mr. Baxter and his team of three techs to find devices for users to take home. Next, Mr. Baxter had to solve the headache of ensuring all users were getting the updates they were supposed to and that their devices were up to date.

The combination of KACE SMA and SDA proved useful to the City of Rochester during this time. KACE SMA helped deploy and upgrade software to computers in multiple locations, as well as providing detailed inventory of all the City's connected devices, maintaining the devices and delivering server management and monitoring. KACE SDA automated the deployment of configuration files, user states, drivers and applications. "Having been using it for so long, I don't have a good handle on what things would have been like a year and a half ago if we hadn't had KACE," said Mr. Baxter.

"I can't imagine trying to do all of the functionality that we're currently doing without either one of our KACE appliances. They are absolutely, hands down, lifesavers and time savers for what we're doing."

Scott Baxter, Tech Support Engineer, City of Rochester

Evolving their use of KACE

Seventeen years later and the City of Rochester is finishing up the process of moving to a new virtual appliance and completely revamping the look, feel, options and opportunities within their SMA environment. "We're going to utilize a bunch of new to us features that I can see some huge, huge benefits from," says Mr. Baxter. He is particularly

excited about the inventory, patching, managed installs and help desk scripting, which will be utilized daily and cut down on the time and effort he would be spending on these tasks. Mr. Baxter is also looking forward to tracking all the City's devices.

The business case for KACE

Mr. Baxter considers both KACE SMA and SDA to be lifesavers and time savers. "There's a lot to them," says Mr. Baxter. "They're complex, they take some effort to learn the different operations and the functionalities that are in them, but the payoff is unimaginable." Specifically, he names the information tracking of the SMA and how it can be tied into the SDA to be able to image computers and use that software database to install products and track licenses, assets, user codes, business units and more. When asked if there was any way he'd consider a new solution over KACE, Mr. Baxter replied, "Honestly, with what we're doing with KACE and what it has done for us, I would be shocked if we could find something that we could easily stand up, move to and have it continue the level of service that we're doing now quickly, easily and seamlessly. I can't imagine what we would find that would be cheaper, even at a 100% increase in price."

About Quest

Quest creates software solutions that make the benefits of new technology real in an increasingly complex IT landscape. From database and systems management, to Active Directory and Office 365 management, and cyber security resilience, Quest helps customers solve their next IT challenge now. Quest Software. Where next meets now.