



One-person IT department automates patching, security, ticketing, inventory, remote access and backup

Edison High School uses Quest® KACE® Systems Management Appliance, KACE Desktop Authority and Quest QoreStor™ to concentrate and streamline entire range of IT service management.



Country: **USA**

Employees: **160**

Industry: **Education**

Website: edisonhs.org

With 120 students, 40 staff members and one person in IT — you — there's no way to delegate, so you'd better automate as much as you can.

It's hard to stay on top of the IT needs in any organization, but when you face a 160:1 ratio of users to IT staff, smart time management becomes imperative.

At Edison High School in Portland, Oregon, Dr. Troy Spetter inherited the role of director of educational technology. Edison is a private school dedicated to meeting the educational needs of students with learning differences, and its IT landscape was long overdue for an update.

About this case study

Inheriting an out-of-date, under-managed, unstaffed IT landscape, a director of educational technology saw that his first priority was to automate patching, security and backup.

Solution

The director gradually enrolled the school's population of laptop computers in the KACE Systems Management Appliance for patching and security, then implemented QoreStor to cut online storage costs for terabytes of backup. He also switched to using remote access in Desktop Authority.

Benefits

- Reduced patching and security from taking 80 percent of the workday to a small fraction
- Used deduplication to back up more than 7 TB of data into less than 2 TB of storage
- Concentrated IT functions of multiple products into two Quest products
- Kept students' and staff's computers updated and protected to accommodate remote learning

Solutions at a glance

- [Patching and security management](#)
- [Reduced storage footprint and costs](#)
- [Centralized desktop management](#)

Automating systems management with KACE

“When I started, our servers were almost 12 years old,” says Spetter, looking back a few years. “The backup system hadn’t been run in about six months. A lot of antiquated things were operating either barely or not at all. And all of the updating and patching had to be done manually; none of it was automated. My job was to do it all, manage it all and plan for IT growth, so I was keen to automate as much as possible.”

Edison had long had a license for Desktop Authority. But with limited time and resources, the product was used only to map network shares and printers when people logged in. Spetter had just begun exploring the other capabilities of Desktop Authority when schools worldwide suddenly started switching to remote learning.

“Our teachers had already run a couple of digital learning days on campus,” says Spetter, “trying out remote tools and using Zoom and Google Classroom with the students. But that didn’t solve the problem of supporting all the teachers, who were working from home on their laptops. I knew I couldn’t manage all those systems manually.”

While working with Desktop Authority, Spetter also learned about the KACE Systems Management Appliance (SMA). He took advantage of promotional pricing to license the SMA for Edison, then started enrolling the school’s computers and setting up schedules for patching. His priority was to automate as much of the patching and security as possible, then focus on other priorities.

Patching and security with the KACE SMA

Spetter’s predecessor had been a tech-savvy teacher who did double duty, running the computers while also running a classroom. Thus, most of the otherwise good infrastructure coasted along unmanaged for three years. Spetter spent his first months learning the tools that were already in place and then using the SMA to automate the previously manual processes of patching and securing endpoints.

“I had also explored Microsoft’s endpoint management, since it’s technically active on our network,” says Spetter. “But Microsoft’s system is complicated to operate. The KACE SMA is easier and it saves time. Patching and security used to take up about 80 percent of my time. Now all I have to do is check their status in the SMA window that I keep open in my browser.”

Edison has a large population of Dell computers, and the interconnectivity between those endpoints and the SMA allows for smooth delivery of Dell-specific updates.

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Dr. Troy Spetter, Director of Educational Technology, Edison High School

Using QoreStor to optimize secondary storage

The school’s backup system was long unused, and even when it had been used, it offered little peace of mind. It had been set to back up only directories and user files, with no protection for system files, servers or Active Directory. The backup targets were removable USB drives.

Spetter chose Veeam for backup, storing locally at first while searching for an efficient, cost-effective way to transfer the school’s backups to the cloud for storage. When his Quest account manager invited him to a webinar about QoreStor, he attended and decided to try it.

“QoreStor gave us the cloud connection we had been lacking,” Spetter says. “Quest showed me that, because QoreStor is virtual, we can use it to send our backups to cloud storage without having to buy and maintain another appliance. So now we use QoreStor with Wasabi cloud-connected storage, which is inexpensive and well suited to backups.”

Having an automated backup solution has enabled proper protection for the school’s data, and the data deduplication in QoreStor greatly reduces the amount of cloud storage Spetter needs. “I’m backing up our Active Directory and 14 virtual machines,” he notes, “two of which are file servers storing a terabyte each. It comes to seven or eight terabytes total, but with QoreStor, our backup online takes up just 1.6 terabytes of storage space. We pay only about 30 dollars a month for the online storage.”

Fewer tools with more features — plus support

Spetter is now aware that the features in Quest products overlap many of those in the array of IT management tools Edison had accumulated over the years.

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“Quest tools do so much,” he says. “I licensed the SMA mainly to help me push out software patches and the like. But when I saw all the other things it did, I started ticking features off the list and asking, ‘What can I eliminate that this tool does better?’ We have separate products for ticketing, inventory and remote access. But I can essentially eliminate three other yearly bills by using all of the features in the SMA and in Desktop Authority.”

When Spetter contacted Quest Technical Support, a service manager ended up replying directly to try to sort out SMA issues from QoreStor issues. Spetter was impressed with the manager’s determination to strengthen the support relationship for the long term by addressing issues with both products. He considers the level of support he has received as one of the most important parts of doing business with Quest.

“The Quest tools have gotten so good,” he says. “When I first started, I had to be here every day for things to function. But now, with the SMA, Desktop Authority, QoreStor and things I have in place, I need to be on campus only when people want to see me. I would say that it has been life-changing to get the level of automation I now have in our systems and to free up that time for other duties. It’s been a phenomenal benefit for me in this position.”

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Software

- [KACE Systems Management Appliance \(SMA\)](#)
- [Quest QoreStor](#)
- [KACE Desktop Authority](#)

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.