

The Australian Trade Commission

AUSTRADE'S ALTIRIS SOLUTION CUTS GLOBAL OS MIGRATION FROM MONTHS TO WEEKS

THE ALTIRIS® SOLUTION:

Altiris® Client Management Suite™ including:

Deployment Solution™
PC Transplant™

THE CHALLENGE

- > Reduce costs and time involved in migrating more than 1,500 client and server operating systems around the world
- > Significantly minimise the amount of procedure documentation that needed to be prepared for OS migrations and application upgrades
- > Reduce the amount of administration required by local office managers in overseeing software upgrade/update projects

THE BUSINESS VALUES

- > Global OS rollout to PCs and servers reduced from six months to six weeks
- > Global rollout of application updates reduced from months to days
- > Local office manager IT administration cut by more than 75 percent

BEATING THE MIGRATION MIGRAINE

Historically, Austrade has faced enormous challenges when rolling out applications, updates, patches and operating system migrations.

When Austrade began planning the migration of its global client population of 1450 clients to Microsoft Windows XP and 70 servers to Windows Server 2003, the sheer enormity and complexity of the project virtually eliminated any thoughts of employing manual processes. According to Austrade IT Engineer, Tony Van Eyk, even the less complicated task of rolling out application upgrades was incredibly time- and resource-intensive.

"We have an extremely distributed IT environment," Van Eyk said, "and bringing off an operating system migration across PC and server population in our overseas offices and 12 local sites demanded a solution that would enable the agency to deploy operating systems and applications from a single, centralised location."

Following extensive evaluation of potential solutions, the Altiris® Client Management Suite™ with its Deployment Solution™ component emerged the clear winner.

FROM MONTHS TO DAYS

The IT support staff at Austrade estimated the migration to Windows XP would take at least six months. Instead, by utilizing Altiris Client Management Suite, it took only six weeks – a reduction of 75 percent.

"While six months may seem somewhat extreme to some people," Van Eyk said, "it's important to bear in mind that without CMS, every single client machine – and that's nearly 1,500 located in Australia and 60 other countries – would have had to be manually backed up, had its operating system upgraded, then all data restored."

Using Altiris CMS, the entire process underwent a drastic change from being intensely manual and time consuming to being fully automated and hands-off. Instead of local IT managers – whose primary role is office manager and trade negotiator – having to manually upgrade each PC, users simply click on a link from within their browser. That link, which was within the CMS portal, automatically invoked a script which initiated a complete data backup, software install based on "personalities", network reconnection, data restore and finally, network logon.

In citing one example of the time and money savings resulting from the use of CMS, Van Eyk related a conversation he had with one of Austrade's IT managers located in the United States. "He told me that traditionally, a large scale migration, such as an operating system, would have required him spending several weeks out of his office, flying all over the country to visit the larger sites to ensure everything was going as planned. With CMS, he didn't have to leave his office once!"

Another example of the massive time and effort savings being achieved by Austrade through use of CMS is the regular rollout of upgrades to its in-house developed customer relationship management (CRM) tool. According to Van Eyk, where a 100 percent rollout used to take up to three months, it now takes less than a week.

REDUCING DOCUMENT PREPARATION

One of the unexpected benefits arising from using Altiris CMS to automate software upgrades and migrations has been a dramatic reduction in the amount of time required to develop certain procedural documents. Where previously, procedure documents for large scale software implementations and migration projects might take up to two weeks, it now takes just a few hours.

Van Eyk explained, "When the software upgrade or migration projects were being done manually by the individual post's manager cum IT manager, it was absolutely vital that the documents be absolutely fool-proof – and that takes an inordinate amount of time and effort. Essentially, if anything could conceivably go wrong, the document had to cover it.

"Now, with CMS providing such a hands-off automated solution, the documentation we send out is around one-to-two pages, which really is only to advise the users of the planned upgrade and what they need to do – which is generally just clicking on a URL that points to the CMS portal – and that's about it."

75 PERCENT IT MANAGEMENT REDUCTION

By eliminating the majority of work that was needed by each post's IT Manager, Austrade's CMS solution has been instrumental in improving individual post efficiency. This is due primarily to the fact that CMS has eliminated the need to

ABOUT AUSTRADE

The Australian Trade Commission (Austrade) is the Australian Government agency that assists Australian companies win overseas business for their products and services by reducing the time, cost and risk involved in selecting, entering and developing international markets. The agency is represented in more than 140 overseas locations in over 60 countries. In Australia, Austrade's domestic network comprises 17 Austrade offices and 54 TradeStart offices, including 8 export hubs. (www.austrade.gov.au)



altiris®

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—TONY VAN EYK
IT Engineer

physically touch each PC for an OS or application upgrade.

“Taking each machine off-line for anywhere up to four hours – even in cases where the post may have had a spare machine that could be used in those circumstances – really was proving to have an impact on post efficiency,” Van Eyk said. “Added to that, the IT manager, whose primary job actually involves other roles, was being forced to devote far too much time to computer management. As a result, this was a major disruption to their work.”

Van Eyk estimates that by automating OS and application maintenance, Austrade has been able to reduce the amount of time spent dealing with IT issues by 75 percent.

“Instead of the local manager spending massive amounts of time on each PC, it’s now the user who selects when the upgrade is done, which is typically just before they go home at the close of business,” Van Eyk said. “They come in the next day

and their PC has been fully updated with all the latest software features and with all their data and settings retained. “Where updating systems used to be an absolute nightmare for our people overseas, it’s now little more than a minor inconvenience – if that!”

DEALING WITH THE HARDWARE UPGRADE

With the client and server OS migration completed, Austrade is currently planning a major hardware refresh program, with Altiris CMS set to play a key role once again. This time, though, the Altiris PC Transplant® Solution will be taking centre stage.

“Now that we have the PCs all migrated to Windows XP, PC Transplant will be used to automate the transfer of files and individual settings to each new PC,” Van Eyk said. “If I was to point to any solution that I regard as being crucial to any broad-scope hardware or software migration project, Altiris CMS would definitely be the one.”

ABOUT ALTIRIS

Altiris, Inc. offers a full line of Web-enabled solutions that empower organizations to easily manage desktops, notebooks, handhelds and Windows, Linux and UNIX servers throughout the IT lifecycle. Altiris provides fully integrated, complete systems management solutions for client and mobile, server, and asset management. Altiris’ vision is to automate, simplify, and reduce the cost and complexity of IT lifecycle management with a rapid return on investment. For more information, visit www.altiris.com.

