



SkyWest

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 SKYWEST AIRLINES INSTALLS SOFTWARE SIGNIFICANTLY FASTER, RESOLVES MORE TICKETS ON FIRST CALL, AND AUTOMATICALLY DOWNLOADS AND INSTALLS PATCHES WITH ALTIRIS

THE SOLUTION

Altiris® Client Management Suite™ including:
 Software Delivery Solution™
 Carbon Copy® Solution Patch Management Solution™

Altiris Asset Management Suite™ including:
 Inventory Solution®
 Application Metering Solution™
 Help Desk Solution™

SKYWEST AIRLINES

SkyWest Airlines, headquartered in St. George, Utah, is the world's largest independently owned regional airline. SkyWest has approximately 8,150 employees and serves 120 cities in 32 states and three Canadian provinces. The airline, a code-share partner with Delta, United and Continental, carried 13.4 million passengers in 2004 and averages 1,500 daily departures.
 (www.skywest.com)

THE CHALLENGE

- > Cut IT travel costs and the time it takes to install software
- > Automate SkyWest's help desk and resolve more tickets on first call.
- > Implement a real-time inventory tracking system
- > Replace SkyWest's manual patch system and prevent use of unauthorized software.

THE BUSINESS VALUES

- > Altiris Software Delivery Solution reduced SkyWest's software installation time by 95 percent and eliminated most travel costs associated with manual installation.
- > Altiris Helpdesk Solution automates all aspects of SkyWest's help desk, from ticket tracking to escalation, and Altiris Carbon Copy Solution allows help desk personnel to remotely control a user's PC to solve problems.
- > Altiris Inventory Solution automatically creates a detailed, real-time inventory of all the hardware and software on SkyWest's network.
- > Altiris Patch Management Solution automates the patch process ensuring the latest patches are installed on all PCs.
- > Altiris Application Metering Solution automatically notifies SkyWest's IT staff when users install unauthorized software.

In the airline industry customer service is everything, and much of that service depends on a reliable network. "We basically operate SkyWest 24/7 on our network," said Kevin Simmons, SkyWest Airlines director of information technology support. "For example, our crews receive their flight releases, which officially allow their assigned flight to take off, on a PC at airports across the U.S. If the releases can't be delivered over the network, we can send them via fax, phone and other means, but alternative methods slow down operations. Delays and cancellations cost an awful lot of money in this business, so it's crucial that our network and our computing resources are highly available at all times."

ALTIRIS AUTOMATES MANUAL PROCESSES

SkyWest, which has standardized on Dell for 10 years because of its world-class support, quality and competitive pricing, operates a nationwide network with 80 Dell PowerEdge servers connecting 1,200 Dell Optiplex Windows desktop PCs and 200 Dell D600 laptops at more than 100 locations around the country. Any amount of downtime can have a significant impact on the revenue of the airline. With that in mind, SkyWest wanted to lower its IT overhead costs while ensuring that its network availability would remain high. It could accomplish this by automating many time-consuming maintenance and support tasks.

"When it was time to push out Windows XP Service Pack 2," continued Simmons, "no one was looking forward to the manual, frustrating and expensive process of visiting each of our 1,400 PCs and loading the software from a CD. That's how we always did it before. We used sneakernet to install packages on the 400 machines in headquarters and actually flew in most of the other 900 machines a few at a time, installed the application, and flew it back to the user. The entire process could take anywhere from two to four days per PC. For some software, like Adobe Acrobat or Internet Explorer, we sent an email to each user asking them to download the latest version from the Internet. But we had no control over the process and could only hope that they actually did download and install the software and then configured it correctly. We wanted to put a solution in place that would automatically perform these jobs and guarantee consistency and compliance across the entire network."

REDUCES SOFTWARE INSTALLATION TIME

SkyWest looked at several of the leading systems management products on the market, and chose Altiris Client Management Suite. "None of the other products had the full-featured set of integrated tools that Altiris has," explained Simmons. "And Altiris uses very little bandwidth. Some of the other products would slow down our network significantly. Thanks to Altiris Software Delivery Solution, sneakernet and downloading applications



altiris®
 intuitive > manageability

"We had no capability to do real-time inventory of our hardware and software. For budgeting, planning and maintenance reasons, we needed to know the physical location of each PC and its configuration, lease condition, patch level, software and a list of other items. Altiris Inventory Solution gives us this information and more, often in a matter of minutes, so we can stay on top of repairs, warranties, leases and take other cost-saving measures."

—Kevin Simmons
Director of Information
Technology Support
SkyWest Airlines

off the Internet are a thing of the past. Users no longer have to wait three or four days for their PC to be returned to them for a simple software installation. We now load and configure software over the network in a fraction of the time—a matter of minutes in some cases—compared to before. Instead of spending several weeks to implement a large software package, we can do it in several hours. Software Delivery Solution reduces rollout times significantly."

"It also generates reports telling us which machines installed the package correctly and which ones didn't, so we can fix it before a user has a problem. When you stop and calculate the travel costs and technician time involved to manually install a single piece of software, the time and money saved by using Altiris is substantial."

MORE HELP DESK TICKETS RESOLVED ON FIRST CALL

SkyWest saw the same increases in efficiency and savings when it implemented Altiris Helpdesk Solution. Before, the five technicians handling support calls used a software tool to track incidents and repairs, but it did not meet the company's needs. "The solution we had in place," noted Simmons, "lacked many of the features that Altiris offers to respond to repair tickets quickly and prevent user downtime. Among other things, we wanted the ability to establish a knowledge base, create a clear escalation path and a detailed incident notification report. The knowledge base is especially useful because it allows us to document recurring problems and their solutions, so when another user reports the same issue, the help desk technician can potentially find a useful solution to the problem. Helpdesk Solution will also alert the appropriate personnel if a ticket is not addressed in a timely manner."

But one of the biggest time- and money-saving features of Altiris is the transparent integration of its many automated tools. "If a user calls and can't explain the problem he is having with his PC," stated Simmons, "the help desk technician can use Altiris to remotely control the PC and see exactly what is wrong. The technician can also use Altiris to train or retrain users on certain procedures that they may be doing incorrectly and, therefore,

causing problems. This helps eliminate the problem and reduces future help desk calls. Altiris provides a wonderful window into the user's world. If the solution to a user problem is installing a new piece of software, the technician can do it remotely with Altiris. Altiris helps us resolve more tickets on the first call so they do not have to be escalated to more expensive second- and third-tier support levels."

REAL-TIME INVENTORY

Keeping track of the hardware and software on SkyWest's nationwide network was nearly impossible. When the airline purchased a new machine or brought an existing one to headquarters for repairs, it would record the hardware inventory details into a database that would quickly become outdated. "We had no capability to do real-time inventory of our hardware and software," said Simmons. "For budgeting, planning and maintenance reasons, we needed to know the physical location of each PC and its configuration, lease condition, patch level, software and a list of other items. Altiris Inventory Solution gives us this information and more, often in a matter of minutes, so we can stay on top of repairs, warranties, leases and take other cost-saving measures."

AUTOMATICALLY PROTECTS NETWORK FROM INFECTIONS

SkyWest uses Altiris Patch Management Solution and Altiris Application Metering Solution to protect its network from viruses and downtime. "Before, we installed patches like we installed software," continued Simmons. "Everything was done manually. For big patches, we had to send a technician to each machine. For small patches, we pointed the users to a directory and hoped they downloaded the patch and configured it correctly. We had no way of checking to make sure each PC was protected by the latest patch. Altiris puts the IT staff in complete control. It automatically downloads the most current patches and installs them over the network. Patch Management Solution allows us to centrally manage the process, and it produces reports that indicate which PCs are current and which are not. With Altiris we are able to move very quickly in a critical patch situation to prevent the network from becoming infected."



"Application Metering Solution generates a list of unauthorized software that's installed on the network and lets us deny the use of certain applications to certain users. There was one incident when we were hit by a virus and Application Metering Solution quickly identified the name of the executable, which allowed us to head off the problem and prevent several systems from crashing."

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.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK, PAID FOR ITSELF

People are starting to notice the increased efficiency and time-savings produced by Altiris. "The IT staff benefits the most from Altiris," explained Simmons. "Every day they see how it saves them time, which saves the company money. In the past, we've had to put six or seven technicians on a plane to visit several locations each over two or three days' time to fix a problem that one technician can now resolve from his PC using Altiris. We get a lot of positive feedback from our help desk technicians and developers. Altiris is certainly paying for itself and has significantly helped us better manage our IT infrastructure."



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