



THE SOLUTION

Altiris® Client Management Suite™ including:

Deployment Solution™
Software Delivery Solution™
Carbon Copy™ Solution
Recovery Solution™
Inventory Solution®

THE WEATHER CHANNEL

The Weather Channel U.S. Network, based in Atlanta, Georgia, produces continuous, 24-hour national, regional, and local weather-related video programming distributed via satellite to cable television systems, other video distributors, and households with satellite receiver dishes. The Weather Channel-cable television's only national all-weather network-employs more than 120 expert meteorologists and is received by more than 87 million households nationwide. Its website attracts 27 million users each month and is currently ranked the tenth most popular website by Nielsen//NetRatings. The Weather Channel is owned by Landmark Communications, Inc., a Norfolk, Virginia-based, privately held media company, and has regional offices in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. (www.weather.com)



altiris®
intuitive > manageability

The Weather Channel U.S. Network

THE WEATHER CHANNEL REDUCES MIGRATION TIME BY 75 PERCENT WHILE INCREASING SUPPORT TO REVENUE-GENERATING CUSTOMERS WITH ALTIRIS

THE CHALLENGE

- > Reduce costs and time spent migrating to Windows XP.
- > Improve speed and quality of IT support to internal and external customers.
- > Increase accuracy of network inventory and IT budget forecasts.
- > Protect user data and speed data recovery.

THE BUSINESS VALUES

- > The Weather Channel decreased Windows XP migration time by 75 percent.
- > The company reduced desktop support visits by nearly 50 percent by using Altiris Software Delivery Solution to automatically install and configure software over the network and by using Altiris Carbon Copy Solution to remotely control PCs, allowing technicians to fix problems without leaving their offices.
- > The Weather Channel replaced a basically manual inventory system with Altiris Inventory Solution to generate a detailed list of all hardware and software assets, allowing the IT department to create accurate forecasts of future budgetary needs.
- > Altiris Recovery Solution for Clients protects user data and speeds recovery of lost data by automating daily snapshots of file deltas for each hard drive on the network.

When the Weather Channel decided to migrate its 800 PCs to Windows XP, a vendor recommended they save time and money by using Altiris software to automate the entire migration process. "Altiris performed as promised," said Christina Neustadt, director of Customer Service for IT Operations for The Weather Channel. "It reduced our estimated migration time by months and required a fraction of the manpower. We were so impressed with the product, that we purchased Altiris Client Management Suite and Altiris Asset Management Suite. Each suite has a powerful set of integrated solutions that are user friendly, easy to manage and save us time and money every time we use them."

The Weather Channel operates an enterprise

network with 600 Dell desktops, 200 Dell laptops and 100 servers. The network connects employees at headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, and the company's six regional offices. Before Altiris, the IT department performed migrations manually, which required most of the department's resources for several months at a time. "In the past," explained Neustadt, "a technician had to visit each PC to install the new operating system (OS) from CDs, then transfer the user's personal profile, and reinstall and configure any other applications. We were also limited by the fact we must do the migrations after normal working hours because Weather Channel is a 24/7 operation. On average, we migrated two machines per night."

MIGRATES 250 PCS IN SIX WEEKS VERSUS SIX MONTHS

The Weather Channel's Windows XP migration is different from previous migrations in that they are upgrading to new PCs at the same time. So instead of going onsite, technicians can install the OS in the department and ship the machines to the users. "No travel time makes things easier," continued Neustadt, "but we were still looking at putting in long hours to do everything by hand. Now, with Deployment Solution we can set up the PCs in a room, connect them to a local server and install Windows XP and our standard set of applications simultaneously to 15 computers. Everything is configured correctly and consistently the first time without a technician touching the machine. We have increased the number of PCs we can migrate in one night sevenfold, and migrated 250 computers in six weeks versus six months, a 75 percent productivity savings. Once the PCs are out on the network, we will be able to use Deployment Solution to perform migrations and reimaging over the wire in a fraction of the time it would take to do manually. For example, it used to take one to two days to reimage a machine by hand. With Altiris we can do it in one to two hours."

RECOVERY SOLUTION FOR CLIENTS AUTOMATICALLY BACKS UP DATA

The Weather Channel uses Altiris Recovery Solution to protect its data and to play a key role in the migration process. "We average about three data recoveries a day," explained Neustadt. "It used

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—Christina Neustadt
Director of Customer Service
The Weather Channel

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.

to take up to several hours-or days if the user's system crashed-to recover the files and restore them. But that's only if the user was doing regular backups to the network. If not, the data was gone forever. But Recovery Solution reduces the risk by automatically taking a daily snapshot of each computer. It uses very little bandwidth, users don't have to remember to backup their data, and it works for laptop users who connect via dialup. It's been a real lifesaver for us, and a huge timesaver during the Windows XP migration. Once we install the base image on a new PC, we simply download the user's last backup and we're finished."

Each year, Neustadt must create a budget for the coming year and forecast which hardware and software will need to be replaced or updated. Before, using a custom-built inventory tool that only captured some hardware data, Neustadt had to make informed estimates when writing the budget. "Taking inventory on the entire system was a nightmare," stated Neustadt. "If we were really ambitious, we would broadcast an email asking everyone to send a list of their current hardware and software. But not everyone would respond and those who did sometimes made mistakes. Other times we would send technicians around to record inventory data from each machine, but that would take months and by the time they compiled the information into a spreadsheet, it was out of date. So accuracy was a real issue."

INVENTORY SOLUTION TAKES GUESSWORK OUT OF BUDGET FORECASTS

"Now, Neustadt uses Altiris Inventory Solution, which provides a comprehensive, detailed list of all the hardware and software on The Weather Channel's network. She can write budget forecasts that are accurate to the dollar and pull up inventory data to help troubleshoot machines. "Recently," noted Neustadt, "I had to create a cost estimate for providing computers to employees who wanted to telecommute. Before that would have taken days and caused a lot of headaches. With Inventory Solution I was able to pull the information I needed in minutes. Altiris also saves me from being thousands of dollars over budget or under on my forecasts. It makes me look smart and puts me in control."

CALLS IN HELP DESK QUEUE REDUCED 500 PERCENT

When users called the desktop support group with a problem, 90 percent of the time technicians had to respond with a desktop visit. Using Altiris Carbon Copy Solution and Altiris Software Delivery Solution, The Weather Channel has cut that rate in half. "Because Carbon Copy Solution lets us take remote control of any PC on the network," said Neustadt, "our technicians can fix many issues without leaving their offices. We can also install and configure software over the network with Software Delivery Solution. Again, in the old days we had to visit PCs to install new software or mail the CDs to users and walk them through the installation process over the phone and hope they didn't have any problems. Now, 50 percent of desktop problems are resolved with Altiris. We used to have 100 to 150 calls sitting in our help desk queue each day. Today we average 20 or 30, a 500 percent decrease."

ALTIRIS PAYS FOR ITSELF

Carbon Copy Solution has freed up technicians so they can provide faster service to external revenue-generating customers. The Weather Channel sells telecommunications companies and other business clients weather-related services like its Notify product, which sends alerts to personal digital assistants (PDAs), cell phones, computers and other devices when severe weather is headed into the user's area. "We have thousands of pieces of proprietary, specialized equipment sitting at cable-head ends and other locations," said Neustadt. "Altiris made us so efficient in the support of our internal customers, that I was able to move more resources to calls that affect company revenue. Altiris software allows me to reallocate resources to where they are needed the most."

Altiris has improved the reputation of The Weather Channel's IT Department. "Perception is everything," noted Neustadt. "Our fast, efficient response to internal and external customers sends the message that we know what we are doing and we are not wasting company time or money. Altiris makes our lives easier and has definitely paid for itself and continues to do so."



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