



Client Management

AUTOMATED SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION

The DX-Union Management Suite automates all of the processes involved in administrating desktop PCs for the event specialist BB Promotion.

BB Promotion specialises in event management as well as audio and light engineering. The company produces musicals, also organising regional special events and arranging tours throughout Germany and the rest of Europe. Around 110 staff are employed at its headquarters in Mannheim and a second office in Cologne. It has further experts, including costume

designers and make-up artists, working at theatres or on the road with one of its many productions which take place all over Europe.

The event specialist has grown fast so far, almost doubling its workforce since it first began. Many IT-related tasks, including the administration of PC workstations, have been taken care of

manually until now. "We look after about 120 PCs and wanted to automate our IT processes still further using automatic software distribution," explains Torsten Herber, IT Manager at BB Promotion. "We found that it doesn't make sense to administrate more than 50 clients manually. Especially when you consider the fact that around 40 per cent of the staff take their notebooks on the road with them. We can't always wait until all staff happen to be in the office with their notebooks. Now software distribution takes place automatically when staff log on to the internal network. This enables us to ensure that the mobile devices of our field staff always comply with the latest security standards."

Modular Solution

When BB Promotion opted for the DX-Union Management Suite in 2008 it had found a solution which covers all of the task areas of client management in individual modules. DX-Union installs standard software on PCs and notebooks, and takes care of the patch management of Microsoft updates. BB Promotion orders all its new computers with the operating system pre-installed. The installation of further applications and all asset tracking is done by DX-Union. DX-Union Synchronize compares the information from Active Directory with the DX-Union database.

A further advantage of the solution is that it allows a clear overview of individual licences. Although the company purchases the operating systems together with the hardware, there was no automatic overview of the licences for software applications in use on the devices. The DX-Union Service Desk, in particular, has improved efficiency since it was introduced in February 2011. The Service Desk module's query function, for example, provides detailed overviews of all the company's software licences. "We use this function a lot, which is why we tested the service desk solution for a long time and were even able to make our own requests regarding the design of the desktop interface," says Herber. The DX-Union Service Desk is a compact application. The users simply forward their queries and jobs to the system by email and are able to follow the running status. The solution offers standard functions such as links between ticket, user and devices, delegation, escalation and a self-service portal. New, existing and processed tickets are also listed clearly.

Around 20 software packages are in regular use. These can be divided into two categories: server installations on the one hand and packages provisioned via the self-service portal on the other. As far as new hardware is concerned, the devices are equipped with the basic installations from the server installation pool. All other packages, e.g. Flash Player, Acrobat Reader and Firefox, are available via the self-service portal. This pool of applications regularly contains updates and users can install their own new software as they need it, reducing the routine workload of the administration team. Software packages are



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created with the help of the DX-Robot add-on, which assists by automating many of the keyboard entries and mouse clicks involved during the installation of software.

Quick, simple and convenient

The new procedure saves time and reduces the occurrence of errors during software installation and client administration. Furthermore the automatic patch management ensures that workstation PCs are constantly up to date. The service desk allows the simple creation of a wide variety of evaluations, without the necessity to duplicate tasks and with the reassurance that no relevant data will be forgotten. All together the transparency of user support has improved considerably, with a more efficient method of identifying jobs to be done by the IT team. Torsten Herber is particularly pleased with the service and the extremely fast reaction times: "All together we feel that we are in good hands with MATERNA's IT specialists," he sums up.

Herber and his team are implementing the major migration to Windows®7 step by step: new computers are being supplied directly with the new operating system. All existing workstation computers will continue to work with Windows XP – until the hardware is due for replacement. "For a small IT team a complete changeover would be too time-intensive. We would have to check at one stroke for example which licences to buy more of and whether all applications work with them," Herber explains the concurrent operation of the two operating systems, which extensive tests have shown to work well. ■

Advantages of the DX-Union Management Suite

- Simple printer management
- Users and their resources accessible at all times
- Operating systems, applications and patches can be distributed quickly and easily.
- Optimisation of licensing costs and compliance with licensing rights
- Plug & play interfaces run securely
- Virtual and classic IT under one roof
- Asset tracking of the entire IT landscape