

Kaseya Helps Rural School District Remotely Manage Distributed Machines

Visibility Into and Control Over Remote Systems Ensures a Proactive, Preventative Approach to IT Systems Management

Situated in the wide-open expanse of northern Ontario, the **Keewatin-Patricia School District (KPSD)** is huge. More than 20 elementary and secondary schools are spread out over 80,000 square kilometers of a heavily forested and sparsely populated area. For rural school districts like KPSD, a reliance on technology is key to providing students with many of the same learning opportunities as students in more urban areas. Reliable access to Internet-connected computers allows students to discover and learn about new and interesting things, and teachers can communicate with each other as they share teaching materials and best practices.

The problem, according to Del Schmucker, Information Systems Manager for KPSD, is consistently maintaining and updating KPSD's more than 2,800 desktops and laptops spread out across the school district. Driving between the 23 schools to resolve help desk issues, provision software and update Windows patches is simply not an option. According to Schmucker, driving from one end of the district to the other takes four hours—and that's if you put the pedal to the metal.

As a result, it often took several weeks to resolve a simple help desk request because the IT staff couldn't be sure when a technician would be able to drive out to a remote part of the school district. Nor were IT requests for new software and hardware met in a timely manner, often taking months to be processed. Proactive maintenance was non-existent. Patch updates were routinely out of date as Schmucker and his staff simply crossed their fingers that vulnerabilities would not be exposed.

The losers in all this were students and their teachers who were forced to make do with poorly-performing systems.

Streamlining Remote Software Deployment

Fortunately, there came a tipping point. In 2002, a teacher in a school one hour away from the IT group's offices requested new software for their school's computer lab (they had a PD session planned the next day). While an important task, the request would have required a technician to drive to the school and manually install the software on each individual desktop. It was a significant project that would have cost time, budget and resources.

Finally, a KPSD technician had had enough and resolved to come up with a better solution. The technician found information on the Internet about Kaseya—a remote and automatic IT systems management solution—and downloaded the demo management tool to remotely install the requested software on the distributed machines. To his surprise, he was able to use Kaseya immediately out of the box to complete the install on all 28 computers in less than three hours.

Suddenly, in one fell stroke, time to resolution could be measured in minutes and hours instead of days and weeks.

A Complete IT Systems Management Solution

The ease with which Kaseya deployed software on remote machines got KPSD thinking. What else could Kaseya do? Schmucker facilitated the purchase of Kaseya, and the agent was deployed on all the computers spread across the school district. Immediately, the IT staff gained valuable visibility into and control over all the systems in the district. At the press of a button, the team suddenly had a complete inventory list of all managed hardware (including OS,



Kaseya Customer

Keewatin-Patricia School District
Kenora, Ontario, Canada
www.kpsdb.on.ca

Industry

K-12 Education

Business Challenge

- Inability to provide consistent IT services and support for hundreds of systems distributed over a large geographic area
- Basic maintenance such as patch management was not feasible, so systems were out-dated and vulnerable
- Help desk requests went days or weeks until a technician could drive out to resolve the issue
- Maintenance took a long time, disrupting users and making inefficient use of resources

Solution

Kaseya IT Automation Framework



installed software, drivers, user information and patch status). After a few days of auditing the system, downloading patches and remotely updating distributed systems, every system was up to date, running smoothly and secured.

"It was like someone had flipped a light switch and let us see—for the first time—all our systems and their status," Schmucker said.

A Proactive, Preventative Approach to IT Systems Management

Eight years later, KPSD continues to use Kaseya to proactively manage its distributed systems, quickly respond to ticketing requests and intelligently resolve help desk issues. Schmucker and his team have implemented a proactive, preventative approach to IT systems maintenance with the aim of heading off potential problems before they turn into major issues. At the same time, basic, repetitive tasks like software deployment and patch management can be automated, ensuring that every system is updated without bogging down the technicians who have to cover thousands of systems over a large area.

"Automation is really the key for us," Schmucker said. "What used to take us three to four days can now be done overnight, so upgrades and patches can be issued when staff is out of the building. Everything happens behind the scenes in a much more efficient manner."

As a result, KPDSB now manages three times the number of distributed systems it did before Kaseya without having to hire additional technicians—a 300 percent efficiency improvement that has resulted in a savings of over \$65,000 annually or the equivalent of a single technician.

Help desk issues are also resolved much more quickly. Gone are the days when a technician would have to drive several hours each way to reconfigure an email account. Remote access and remote control capabilities are integrated directly in the Kaseya dashboard on a single pane of glass, allowing a technician to remotely resolve the issues in real time within minutes.

"Kaseya has become so ingrained in how we provide consistent IT services and support to our schools, we couldn't imagine our lives without it," Schmucker said. "It's a powerful central tool that we can use to ensure we are touching every system."

Recovering Stolen Property

Several years after installing Kaseya, two laptops went missing from a KPSD school. There were no motives and no leads, causing nearly everyone to chalk up the losses as unrecoverable. Schmucker wasn't ready to give up and set an alarm through the KPSD IT team to alert him if the missing laptops showed up in the Kaseya inventory system.

Two weeks later a ping on the Kaseya server gave them the lead that would eventually allow the police to recover the stolen property. Once the systems showed up in Kaseya, a technician was able to remotely audit the laptops. An IP address led to a physical street address where law enforcement was able to catch the perpetrator using the stolen property. Charges were filed and the laptops were eventually returned to the school. While the recovered value of the laptops was \$3,000 the message it sent to staff and students was a significant deterrent to further theft.

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Del Schmucker

Information Systems Manager,
Keewatin-Patricia School District

Key Benefits

- Proactive and remote IT management strategy ensures availability and increases performance of the district's 2,800 distributed systems
- Manage three times the number of systems without hiring additional staff
- Time to resolution is now measured in minutes and hours rather than days and weeks
- Automation allows repetitive tasks to be scheduled during off-hours, reducing planned and unplanned downtime

About Kaseya

Kaseya is the leading global provider of IT Systems Management software. Kaseya solutions empower virtually everyone — from individual consumers to large corporations and IT service providers — to proactively monitor, manage and control IT assets remotely, easily and efficiently from one integrated Web-based platform.

For a free 30 day trial visit www.kaseya.com/download

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