

»» Technology Savvy County Seat Improving Desktop Governance



When a technical evaluation panel in the county seat of one of the more distinguished technology research and development regions in the United States† initiated a project to improve the management of its 4,500 desktop and mobile computers, one set of solutions bubbled to the top. After examining a variety of solutions, the county's evaluation panel chose LANDesk® Management Suite and LANDesk® Asset Manager based on their ability to deliver the technical capabilities the county required. And to make sure the county could maximize its investment in the solution, it engaged the help of LANDesk® Professional Services in its deployment.

Good Stewards

One of the primary goals of the county's desktop management initiative was to be able to know on an ongoing basis what it had in inventory in terms of desktops and laptops, as well as the various operating systems and applications in use on those machines. "One of our most important responsibilities as a government entity is to be good stewards of the public and taxpayers' dollars," says the county's IT Business Consultant. "Not only did we need to make sure that we had licensing compliance, but we also needed to reduce cost by not over-purchasing licenses or purchasing licenses that weren't being used by our users."

To address this need, the county chose LANDesk® Management Suite and LANDesk® Asset Manager, and decided to bring in LANDesk® Professional Services to help roll the solutions out. "Even though we have an extremely technical and intelligent staff, we felt it would be foolish for us to think that we would have the time, resources, and skill set to deploy something of this magnitude, and which we had no previous experience with, and then expect it to work properly," says the county's Customer Services Supervisor. "With the help of LANDesk Professional Services our implementation went smoothly. Their performance not only met our expectations, but surpassed them in a number of areas."

For the deployment, the county took a three-phase approach with its engagement of LANDesk Professional Services. It consisted of initial training, and a split implementation that involved a primary rollout and a follow-up visit that included system fine-tuning and in-depth, hands-on mentoring.

Business Needs

- Deploy in a timely manner and within budget a solution that would improve its desktop and asset management capabilities.

Solution

- LANDesk® Professional Services
- LANDesk® Asset Manager
- LANDesk® Management Suite

Business Benefits

- Provided upfront training to facilitate deployment planning and to help IT staff fully understand and leverage the solutions
- Maximized usage of deployment resources by tailoring them to meet the county's unique and changing needs
- Deployed solution on budget and as planned in 34 man-days
- Provided post hands-on training to ensure the most effective solution usage
- Enabled the county to ensure software license compliance, as well as eliminate over-purchasing of licenses
- Improved overall desktop management capabilities, including faster helpdesk problem resolution and simpler software distribution to all 4,500 PCs, including mobile laptops

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IT BUSINESS CONSULTANT

COUNTY SEAT OF ONE OF THE MORE

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Facilitating Deployment Planning

Before the actual rollout, the county wanted to educate all of its staff members that would be involved in using the LANDesk® solutions on how the system would work, what their individual roles would be in regards to the system, as well as help them understand the solutions’ technical characteristics and capabilities. “The trainers from LANDesk were excellent,” says the Customer Services Supervisor. “Still, if they had any doubts about how some aspects of the solution should function on a day-to-day basis, they didn’t hesitate to call their LANDesk peers and discuss it. That gave us the confidence that they were always guiding us in the right direction.”

The initial training also gave the county the ability to make educated and insightful decisions about its deployment plans. “The training made us more aware of some of the nuances of the system,” says the county’s IT Business Consultant. “That made it easier for us to plan and decide how we wanted our LANDesk environment to look when it did come time to roll it out.”

Instant Support and Flexible Resources

The first stage of the rollout focused on building and distributing the LANDesk® agents to the majority of the county’s 4,500 nodes. It also involved defining administrative users and groups’ roles and scopes. “Utilizing LANDesk Professional Services really built our confidence and ability in using the product itself,” says the IT Business Consultant. “It provided us direct and instant support during the deployment. If we had any issues or questions, the LANDesk deployment team either answered them immediately or if needed, they would call their engineering friends back at LANDesk headquarters.”

The county also appreciated how flexible the LANDesk team was in regards to meeting its specific needs and making sure that the engagement proceeded in the best manner possible. “LANDesk was always very sensitive to our needs,” the IT Business Consultant says. “Prior to starting a new phase of the deployment, they would call ahead to ask us what specifics we wanted to focus on for that next period of time so they could make sure to match the appropriate LANDesk resources to our requirements.”

“They were also very good at engaging our staff so that we had a very good understanding of what they were doing and why,” the Customer Services Supervisor says. “There were many nights when someone from LANDesk Professional Services would stay late to work with a member of one of our teams to address various issues or concerns.”

In-depth Guidance

By splitting the implementation phase in two, it gave the county’s IT staff an opportunity to gain some experience using the LANDesk® solutions before the final deployment phase. This experience allowed staff members to develop whatever questions they might have about their specific roles in using LANDesk® Management Suite and LANDesk® Asset Manager. Once the LANDesk team returned, the county’s team was ready to dive deep into specific areas or features of the system.

One of these areas dealt with how to best implement OS and software distribution in the county’s very unique environment, which includes mobile users that use squad cars or other emergency vehicles as their offices. “We serve the entire county,” the Customer Services Supervisor says. “This includes administrative offices, the Sheriff’s office, emergency medical services, libraries, parks and recreation, and more. By no means do our machines have a similar image across the board. LANDesk Professional Services helped us address the needs associated with having a very diverse environment.”

“They basically gave us over-the-shoulder training,” the Customer Services Supervisor adds. “They would watch how we used the solution, and then teach us how to better understand and more effectively use its features and components.”

Fine-Tuned Desktop Management Arsenal

As a result of the deployment, the county now has a fine-tuned arsenal of desktop management tools, especially in the areas of asset management, software distribution, and remote troubleshooting.

“Prior to implementing LANDesk, the only way we had of knowing how much and what we had, was to visit each machine and do a physical inventory,” the IT Business Consultant says. “But since we rarely had the time or resources to do a physical inventory, we couldn’t get an accurate accounting of our assets. Now, with LANDesk Asset Manager we just run a report and we know exactly how many machines we have and what’s on those machines. It makes it a whole lot easier, and has saved a considerable amount of time for our procurement staff, as well as our desktop technicians.”

LANDesk® Management Suite has simplified the county’s efforts in terms of rolling out new software, patches, anti-virus signatures, and updates to all of its 4,500 nodes, including the laptops in the vehicles used by Sheriff’s deputies, animal control, inspectors, and emergency medical services. “LANDesk Management Suite allows us to easily roll out software, patches, or whatever to all of our users, including our mobile users,” the IT Business Consultant says. “Many connect to the network in a variety of ways, but no matter how they connect, once they hit the network, whatever updates are waiting for them are automatically deployed.”

The remote control capabilities in LANDesk Management Suite have also had a big impact on the county’s support efforts. “We used a remote control tool before LANDesk, but it wasn’t nearly as robust,” the Customer Services Supervisor says. “LANDesk Management Suite remote control has enabled a lot of our trouble tickets to be handled and resolved at the first level by the helpdesk, rather than needing to deploy a technician. So, instead of users having to wait for a technician to drive 40 miles or so to their site to fix a problem, it’s resolved in minutes via remote control.”

Immense Capabilities and Results

From its engagement with LANDesk® Professional Services to its ability to now leverage the deployed LANDesk® solutions, the county has been extremely pleased with its experience with LANDesk. “The LANDesk solutions have immense capabilities,” the IT Business Consultant says. “They can pretty much do anything that we need them to do. It’s just a simple matter of figuring out how to get them to do it, and LANDesk Professional Services have been terrific in that regard. LANDesk Professional Services were truly professional and easy to work with. They did what they said they were going to do. They were on time and on budget. They really did an excellent job.”



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† NOTE: THE COUNTY’S NAME AND ITS EMPLOYEE’S NAMES HAVE NOT BEEN DISCLOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS POLICY NOT TO USE ITS NAME IN ANY PROMOTIONS OR PUBLIC RELATIONS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

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