

Entertainment Publications Promotes the Value of Endpoint Policy Management™

Two-For-One Coupon Leader Automates Remote Systems Management With iPass

The Challenge: Automate the management of local, remote and mobile systems across a widely dispersed enterprise

The Solution: iPass Endpoint Policy Management

The Result: Replaced 700 systems in one week versus three months; deployed the ZOTOB worm patch in hours



Michigan-based Entertainment Publications is the world's leading marketer of coupon books, discounts and merchant promotions. This pioneer of the "two-for-one" discount is best-known for its flagship product, the Entertainment® book. Each year, more than 169 million transactions representing more than \$6.5 billion in commerce occur between merchants and Entertainment members in more than 160 major markets.

THE CHALLENGE

More than half of Entertainment Publication's 1,150 PC users work remotely—including mobile sales reps, home-based workers and traveling executives. These users access numerous internal systems and legacy applications, using an ever-changing variety of connection points, methods and speeds.

Never knowing when, where or how long these remote and mobile systems would be connected, the IT group was spending far too much time and effort tracking hardware and software assets. "We had a good idea of the hardware and software we owned, but unless it resided in our corporate office, we had no idea of where it was located," recalls Mark Watts, network engineer for Entertainment Publications. "And we simply had no way to patch or maintain mobile systems or push software to them."

Without automated software management and deployment, keeping remote systems healthy and up-to-date was a hands-on, labor-intensive burden, fraught with unnecessary expense. The IT group would burn update CDs, mail them to users with installation instructions and hope the users complied.

Those who did comply often required help desk support to walk them through the installation process. Those who didn't might fly under the radar for weeks or months at a time—unprotected against new vulnerabilities and unable to use the latest software features. "Even after we went through all that time and expense, we didn't really know how many people were actually deploying the updates," admits Watts.

"When the ZOTOB worm hit, Endpoint Policy Management patched nearly all of our PCs in three hours. Without it, protecting our systems would have taken weeks."

MARK WATTS
Network Engineer, Entertainment Publications

THE SOLUTION

Entertainment Publishing desperately needed a solution for asset tracking, patch management and automated software deployment. The IT group had little experience with automated systems management, so they wanted a solution that was easy to learn and use.

In January, 2005, they began evaluating systems management packages including iPass Endpoint Policy Management™, as well as LANDesk Management Suite and CA Unicenter.

Endpoint Policy Management was more affordable than the other solutions. But even a company in the bargain business knows that a solution has to stand on its own merits—not just

Trusted connections. No compromises.





on a lower price point. The iPass solution offered one feature that the competitors couldn't equal—but that Entertainment Publications found essential. "No other vendor could do dynamic bandwidth throttling," recalls Watts. "It's not uncommon for us to have 20 machines on a fairly slow WAN link, so this capability was a big deal to us."

Dynamic bandwidth throttling intelligently manages the bandwidth used by client agents and management servers during software deployment. This enables distribution to occur without depriving other processes of the bandwidth they need—so the network load at any given time is minimized, and users remain productive.

But it wasn't just user productivity that clinched the decision. Endpoint Policy Management provides a single solution that essentially makes remote and mobile PCs just as manageable as PCs on the corporate LAN. "Let's face it," Watts says, "managing mobile devices is the hardest part. If you can do mobile well, managing networked PCs is easy."

THE RESULT

"After running a short pilot, we bought the product and I attended product training," recalls Watts. "The deployment was fantastic. In less than two weeks we were inventorying systems and deploying software." Now, Entertainment Publications has a single system for managing, inventorying and updating all systems, no matter where or how they connect.

"Endpoint Policy Management is very intuitive to use," reports Watts. "Anyone can deploy the product and be proficient very quickly. Assembling a package for distribution, calling commands, and the way it deals with copying and transmitting files—all of it is phenomenally easy to do."

So easy, in fact, that the IT staff has become much more proactive in keeping systems, especially remote systems, up to date. Assembling a package for distribution takes about twenty minutes and deploying it requires one right-click—immeasurably faster and more reliable than the old approach of mailing out CDs.

Entertainment Publications found some new, highly creative ways to use the product. For example, Watts recalls one user who had a notebook with an unknown infection. IT wanted the user to send the notebook in for a hands-on diagnosis, but the user simply wouldn't comply. IT simply pushed a package out to the notebook that caused a pop-up screen to appear every five minutes, reminding the user to return the machine. When the user continued to work through these constant interruptions for another week, IT pushed out another package that caused the notebook to shut down automatically. The notebook was returned the next day.

Entertainment Publications has also used Endpoint Policy Management to refresh its 700 desktops in one week—as opposed to the three months it used to take. When the ZOTOB worm was knocking out corporate servers across the U.S., IT staff pushed a patch out to almost the entire organization within three hours—instead of weeks. The help desk uses Endpoint Policy Management to accelerate problem resolution, getting instant access to hardware and software inventory when a user calls.

Going forward, Entertainment Publications expects to find many more uses for Endpoint Policy Management. You could say that with Endpoint Policy Management, Entertainment Publications has an open book of IT management possibilities.

ABOUT IPASS

iPass Inc. (NASDAQ: IPAS) provides trusted connectivity services that help enterprises maximize their return on investment in workforce mobility. With flexible iPass connectivity, security and endpoint management services, customers can build and manage their own broadband remote access solutions for mobile workers, branch offices and home offices. The iPass virtual network spans 160 countries and includes the world's largest Wi-Fi footprint. Founded in 1996, iPass is headquartered in Redwood Shores, Calif., with offices throughout North America, Asia and Europe. ■

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