

»» Streamlining PC support for a people-based business



Global leader

Adecco SA is the world's largest HR solutions company, with services ranging from staffing and career development to executive search and e-recruitment. Serving around 130,000 clients and up to 700,000 associates every day, it has the highest market share, revenue, cash flow and market capitalisation in the industry. Net income in 2004 was €332 million, up by nine per cent on the previous year.

Demands of software distribution

The company's thriving Benelux operation encompasses more than 170 branches throughout the Netherlands and 160 in Belgium. This highly distributed operation was planning to replace its entire PC installation early in 2004 – some 1,100 systems in the Netherlands and 600 in Belgium.

The main reason for this upgrade was to prepare for the introduction of Windows* XP. However, Adecco also wanted to use it as an opportunity to improve the efficiency of its software distribution. Typically, the PCs in the branch offices run Microsoft* Office*, Lotus* Notes* and a bespoke application which Adecco developed internally to support its core business.

This front-office solution consists of candidate and client databases together with an order entry system. Staff use it to match candidates to current jobs, manage contracts, and enter time sheets. A client-server application, it is updated every month on every PC, a time-consuming although essential task.

Time and cost savings

Adecco's ICT Director for Benelux, Franck Lamouller, evaluated some of the leading systems management solutions. He concluded that LANDesk® Management Suite offered all the functionality Adecco needed (and more), and by far the best price/performance ratio.

The Benelux operation deployed LANDesk Management Suite at the same time as it replaced its PCs. The LANDesk Software solution allowed Adecco to create a standardised image for each desktop, including the operating system and applications, and to install this on every new PC.

Business Needs

- More efficient distribution of updates to bespoke front-office application
- More centralised PC support in a distributed environment
- Reduced downtime for 1,700 PCs in over 330 branches

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite

Business Benefits

- Time taken on monthly software updates reduced by around 70 per cent
- Cost savings and efficiency gains in ICT function
- Higher staff productivity in branches

“Our ICT operation is more efficient and cost effective because we can do much more with the same number of people. Our business is also running more efficiently thanks to a reduction in downtime and excellent functionality that allows us to serve our staff – and therefore our clients – better than ever before.”

FRANCK LAMOULLER
ICT DIRECTOR FOR BENELUX
ADECCO NL

The benefits of using LANDesk Management Suite were instant and obvious, as Franck Lamouller explains. “Instead of running manual scripts to update our front-office application, we now prepare the updates on the distribution servers and just send them out. It used to take five or six hours, and now it takes 20 minutes for the entire Benelux operation.”

Just as importantly, whenever a PC breaks down, the helpdesk team can now configure a replacement system in 20 minutes – a task that used to take at least half a day. This means even better staff productivity in the branches, in an industry that relies on fast and efficient responses to clients’ requests.

Business and IT benefits

Adecco is also taking advantage of the asset management capabilities of LANDesk® Management Suite. The company used to rely on a manual process for maintaining its database of PC configurations and components. Now, however, LANDesk Management Suite holds a central database that is accurate and comprehensive 24 hours a day.

“It’s useful from an ICT perspective to have a fully up-to-date view of all our PCs,” Franck Lamouller confirms. “But it’s also relevant from a business point of view because we charge the PCs back to the branches. This gives us a 100 per cent correct view of what those charges should be.”

Another benefit is in the area of software distribution to the company’s laptops. Unlike desktop PCs, these tend to use a number of different versions of operating systems and applications. The asset management capability is invaluable for tracking those variations and avoiding any incompatibilities or other problems.

Training tool

Surprisingly, for an operation that is geographically distributed, Adecco in Benelux does not rely heavily on the remote control capabilities of LANDesk® Management Suite. According to Franck Lamouller, this is partly because the company’s PCs are so new that there are currently few technical problems.

In spite of that, helpdesk engineers regularly use remote control to show branch staff how to use a particular feature of the front-desk application, or to answer other software-related questions. “It’s as much a training tool as a trouble-shooting device,” says Franck Lamouller.

Adecco was already using a remote control application before it deployed LANDesk Management Suite, so is unable to quantify the benefits of this functionality. However, the company sees benefits in being able to consolidate all its support applications into one solution.

Serving clients better

Adecco plans to install Windows XP on its PCs throughout Benelux in 2005. Early experience of using LANDesk® Management Suite has made Franck Lamouller optimistic about the project. "This kind of job would normally take around six weeks, but I think we'll probably cut it down to two," he explains.

He is also reviewing LANDesk Patch Manager with a view to supporting the company's ongoing battle against viruses and further strengthening its security. Meanwhile, the Benelux operation continues to enjoy a range of benefits from LANDesk Management Suite. Franck Lamouller concludes:

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