



## Bryant University

### Achieving Excellence in Academic Computing

Throughout its 144-year history, Bryant University has been building the knowledge and character of its students to help them achieve success. As a student-centered university, Bryant focuses on providing rigorous academic programs that integrate business and liberal arts to develop the skills and critical thinking essential to every profession. To help its 3,300 students pursue these objectives, the university issues students a laptop computer for their educational and personal use. Making sure the laptops meet students' needs is the function of the university's Academic Computing department. The department has found this role significantly easier and more cost-effective to fulfill ever since it started leveraging the automated systems management provided by LANDesk® Management Suite for ThinkVantage™ Technologies, a Lenovo offering in conjunction with LANDesk.

#### Business Needs

- Streamline the management and standardization of 3,300 ThinkPad laptops issued to students.

#### Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite for ThinkVantage™ Technologies

#### Business Benefits

- Resolved overnight a wireless driver update problem the Academic Computing department had been struggling with since the start of the academic year.
- Easily performed automated, large-scale and targeted deployments of applications, updates, and fixes to the various laptops distributed among its students.
- Quickly identified which batteries in the school's 3,300 student laptops were defective so they could be replaced before negatively impacting students.
- Leveraged LANDesk® Professional Services deploy the solution for optimum management success.

#### Keeping Connected

All incoming freshman at Bryant receive a Lenovo ThinkPad laptop as part of their tuition package to start the year. Then two years later, when the students are juniors, they are refreshed with a new laptop model, which is theirs to keep upon graduation. Three months before the fall semester begins, the Academic Computing department at Bryant begins development of the software image to be used for these laptops. When ready, that image is sent to Lenovo, which within a week begins production of roughly 1,600 new laptops for the university. "It's a very time-critical process," explains Ethan Poole, academic systems technician at Bryant. "We have a very limited amount of time to create and test our laptop image before we need to start distributing them to our students."

Due to that tight timeframe, quite often updates or patches subsequently become available post-production that need to be applied to each laptop. Without the assistance of LANDesk® Management Suite, that process would not only be extremely time consuming, but it would be nearly impossible to complete successfully. Such was the case this school year when a wireless driver update designed to fix a connectivity issue came out just after the new set of laptops had been manufactured, imaged, and shipped back to Bryant.

"We have a very large mobile environment throughout our campus," says Joseph Soffey, academic systems analyst at Bryant. "Whether they're in the residence halls, the library, or classrooms, our students depend on their wireless connections. We emailed all the affected students at least three times requesting that they download the updated wireless driver from our Laptop Central Web site, but only a few actually did. Instead, when students experienced the connectivity problem, they contacted the help desk, requiring us to install it manually for them."

After four months, barely 200 of the 1,600 affected laptops had received the wireless update. That changed nearly overnight when Bryant brought in LANDesk Management Suite. "In less than a day, LANDesk enabled us to resolve a problem we had struggled with since the beginning of the school year," Poole says. "LANDesk Management Suite enabled us to take an ongoing problem that plagued our help desk and put it into an automated process. It let us query and see immediately which laptops needed the update. We then took about a day to build and test the driver package, and then we were able to deploy it in minutes with LANDesk."

## Happier Students

In addition to being able to seamlessly deploy updates and fixes to its studentbody's laptops, LANDesk® Management Suite helps Bryant easily perform large-scale and complex application deployments as well as targeted application deployments. The ability to target deployments provides Bryant a significant benefit. When professors require their students to have an application that's not on the standard image, it can be deployed automatically to the laptops of those students registered for the associated class, rather than requiring those students to download it or sequence it for access via a portal system such as Citrix. As a result, the university enjoys lower software licensing costs, fewer help desk headaches, and happier students.

"LANDesk gives us an elegant hands-off solution for pushing out applications to everyone all at once or to just specific groups of students that need them," Soffey says. "It has certainly made our jobs a lot easier, lightening our load and improving our efficiency. It has also saved our students from having to download updates themselves or visit us. It has definitely improved our students' overall experience and satisfaction."

## Staying Powered Up

Since Bryant is using LANDesk® Management Suite for ThinkVantage™ Technologies, it enjoys added benefits in managing its Lenovo ThinkPad laptops. This was especially advantageous when some of the laptops started experiencing an inordinate number of battery failures. "Thanks to the integration between Lenovo ThinkVantage Technologies and LANDesk Management Suite we were able to see the details of each laptop's battery via the power management software," Poole says. "We could look at their battery cycle counts, watt hours remaining, manufacturer, when it was created, and when it was first used. That made it easy for us to identify which laptops had batteries that needed to be replaced and which ones didn't."

"For the battery recall, LANDesk was a real blessing for us," Soffey adds. "Our students depend on being able to use their laptops in their classrooms where they might or might not have a power outlet. So, this was a very time-sensitive situation. LANDesk enabled us to quickly generate the reports so we could get the needed replacements as soon as possible."

## Revolutionizing Systems Management

To help Bryant get the most out of its LANDesk environment, the university first enlisted the help of LANDesk® Professional Services to deploy the solution and get the Academic Computing team up to speed quickly on the many ways the solution could enable team members to be more efficient and productive.

"We brought LANDesk Professional Services in with very specific goals in mind, and they made sure all of those goals were met," Poole says. "They walked us through the installation and how to use the solution. They documented everything that had been done. They went over with us all of the configurations with our clients and servers. They answered every question we had. They made us feel extremely comfortable with the product to the point that we had the confidence we could take over once they left. It was an excellent experience."

The laptop program at Bryant University is just one of the ways that the university strives to differentiate itself from other schools. LANDesk® Management Suite for ThinkVantage™ Technologies enables that program to run more efficiently and smoothly.

"Making our students happy is a number one priority for us," says David Gannon, associate director of Academic Computing at Bryant University. "LANDesk has revolutionized how we get things done here, and we've only just begun to tap into its capabilities. It enables us to be more proactive in creating a positive user experience. It gives us the ability to keep our environment as standardized as possible, making it easier to maintain and to keep things running smooth. I believe there is no limit to its potential for us. We have been extremely satisfied with LANDesk."



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