

Alverno College Overhauls IT System Management

Summary

Alverno College's Technology Services team desired more operational efficiency in its computer systems and, especially, the time spent maintaining them. We helped the Alverno staff put in place a comprehensive workstation and server management system that allows them to make a change once and implement it in all parts of their system.

The integrated approach and process automations helps Technology Services stay focused on department priorities, rather than getting bogged down with repetitive service delivery requirements. The solution also helps Alverno better manage (and reduce) software licensing costs because of much greater insight into servers and workstations across its entire campus. We worked closely with the Alverno team to document project goals. We then designed and implemented a new, integrated System Center 2012 Configuration Manager environment. Configuration Manager gives Alverno the ability to implement automated processes in like manner to the large, multi-national companies that also use this same product to increase operational efficiency.

Solution

Working with Alverno's Technology Services team, we gathered information about worksites, connection speeds, the number of workstations at each site, and other parameters. Then, we planned and installed a System Center 2012 Configuration Manager environment to meet Alverno's specific needs. The project resulted in a comprehensive workstation and server management solution so Alverno's IT team could manage inventory, assessment, deployment, configuration, and update management from one central location. Here are some technical details:

- ▶ We used Task Sequence capabilities available for Operating System Deployment to create an OS Image independent of drivers and applications, and then install drivers and applications as needed.
- ▶ We established integrated reporting that allowed Alverno to identify where applications were installed, missing, and could be removed.
- ▶ We deployed System Center 2012 Endpoint Protection to replace a separate virus protection solution and integrate with both Operating System Deployment and the client install for existing systems.

One specialized need related to computers in Alverno's college lab environments, which use Deep Freeze software for "reboot to restore" functionality. Because the application "freezes" computers, the project team needed an approach that would accommodate system updates and logging by System Center Configuration Manager. We established a process to ensure that all lab computers are in the "thawed state" when Configuration Manager does its work.

Another portion of the project focused on training to help ensure smooth operation of the Configuration Manager environment going forward. In the spirit of the college setting, we conducted a classroom-type training session in which Alverno technology specialists practiced packaging applications in Configuration Manager and performing other tasks. We also produced customized documentation specific to Alverno's environment that goes beyond the more generic, technical information available publicly.



Organization

Alverno College

www.alverno.edu

Project Location: Milwaukee, WI

Employees: 500+

Organization Type

Private, independent college.

Organization Profile

Alverno College is one of the country's largest Catholic women's colleges, with an enrollment of over 2,000 undergraduate women and an additional 500+ women and men enrolled in graduate programs.