

Success Story:

Kuoni

Customer Profile: Kuoni is a leading global broad-based travel and destination management services provider. Founded in Switzerland in 1906, the company today has operations in almost 100 countries on five continents. Kuoni provides holiday travel services directly to customers and also serves as a business partner for providers and resellers of destination services.

Challenge: As a result of manual software request and deployment processes, the company was experiencing high IT costs, excessive service desk workload and delays in delivering software to users. The IT organization implemented an enterprise software deployment tool several years ago, but that solution proved to be problematic, requiring frequent manual intervention and lacking the robust functionality Kuoni required. The company needed to streamline and automate its processes to improve IT productivity and enable the staff to support an increase in the number and types of business applications used as well as an expanding user base due to merger and acquisition activities.

Solution: Kuoni switched from its previous deployment system to Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) 2012 and implemented Flexera Software App Portal to empower users with self-service software requests through an enterprise app store. With App Portal and SCCM, Kuoni has automated the request and fulfillment process, ensuring that users can easily and quickly access the software they need while maintaining compliance with license contract terms. In addition, Kuoni replaced its outdated packaging tool with Flexera Software AdminStudio to automate and streamline the creation of application packages in MSI and virtual formats.

Benefits: With App Portal, Kuoni has an automated, self-service approach for handling a variety of scenarios related to deploying applications, operating systems and services. Ultimately, approximately 10,000 employees worldwide will have easy access to more than 200 business applications along with productivity-enhancing services such as shared folders, distribution lists and group mailboxes. Additionally, App Portal is giving the IT staff effective tools for taking on unanticipated projects such as a recent VDI rollout and the rapid onboarding of users at a newly acquired company.



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Steven Eschinger

*Head of Client Services and Integration
Global IT Infrastructure*



KUONI

Based in Switzerland, Kuoni is a leader in the travel services industry. In 13 of the past 15 years, the company was named the World's Leading Tour Operator at the annual World Travel Awards, which acknowledges and celebrates excellence across all sectors of the tourism industry.

The company is committed to excellence in every area of the business, and the IT organization is no exception. Approximately 10,000 employees in hundreds of offices around the world rely on IT for the business applications they need to deliver exceptional customer service.

The Global IT Infrastructure group supports these employees with such services as application packaging and deployment, operating system migrations, and troubleshooting and support. The group is also responsible for assimilating users from acquired companies into the standard Kuoni environment with respect to operating systems and applications.

Transforming Application Delivery

In the past year, IT has undergone a major transformation in the way the staff manages the preparation and deployment of applications. At the heart of the transformation is Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM), which Kuoni has adopted as its global standard for deployment.

A critical component of the company's deployment strategy is the use of Flexera Software App Portal, an industry-leading enterprise app store solution that empowers employees to request applications and other items from an online catalog using a Web browser. Once a self-service request is submitted, App Portal executes the fulfillment process end to end, automating approvals, enforcing proper software licensing, and handing off the application to SCCM for delivery to the user.

IT has also standardized on Flexera Software AdminStudio for creating MSI and App-V packages for inclusion in the enterprise app store catalog.

Changing the Status Quo

In recent years, IT Infrastructure has been evolving from a manual software and services request process to a streamlined and automated one. Previously, requests were submitted and approved using a manual, paper-based process, with the service desk taking responsibility for installing software on user devices. Manual efforts consumed valuable service desk time and users often waited several days before receiving the software they requested.

Due to issues with the deployment tool the service desk often experienced difficulties in getting software to users. "Sometimes they would attempt to deploy software but it just wouldn't go out," recalled Steven Eschinger, Head of Client Services and Integration. "That meant manual intervention by the service desk staff."

Getting Expert Advice

To address these issues, IT decided to replace the solution with SCCM. Because of the scope of the project, the staff enlisted the help of redtoo, a global consulting company and Flexera Software partner, to help with the planning, design and implementation.

As a Flexera Software partner, redtoo was familiar with App Portal and informed members of the Client Services and Integration team how it could work with SCCM to streamline and automate software requests and approvals. The Kuoni IT staff was enthusiastic because the company has adopted a strategy of introducing self-service wherever possible to help contain costs.

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Speeding Migration to SCCM

The IT staff quickly discovered that there were many other issues and scenarios App Portal could address. The staff used the solution from the start to streamline the migration of clients to the SCCM environment. To make this happen, the staff worked with redtoo consultants to establish configurations based on geographic location, which utilized the Roles feature of App Portal. Each location is identified by a site code.

The site code determines time zone, language, keyboard layout, application sets, Active Directory (AD) Organizational Unit and other parameters. It also provides a basis for determining the number of users at each location (or *business unit*) for reporting and chargeback purposes.

A custom wizard enables the staff to choose the site code when staging a computer with SCCM and the computer will receive all of its configuration settings automatically. IT can easily modify role information and add new roles as necessary. This approach proved to be especially beneficial in a recent acquisition by allowing IT to create and deploy the proper configurations for users at the newly acquired locations.

Offering Users Many Options

Because it integrates with Active Directory, App Portal can fulfill self-service requests for a variety of items other than software. Because access privileges are based on AD security groups, Kuoni has been able to include shared folders, distribution lists, group mailboxes and other services in the App Portal online catalog, thereby enabling easy access by business users.

The Client Services and Integration team has already extended self-service access to 2,500 users and has added more than 100 applications to the App Portal catalog.

Smoothing the Move to VDI

Kuoni is using App Portal and AdminStudio to accelerate a major virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) rollout that involves users in locations around the world. The VDI implementation consists of

Windows ThinPC as a base to connect the users to a Citrix environment through Citrix Receiver.

The staff used AdminStudio to repackage the applications for App-V, and then deployed the virtual desktop environment to the target clients using SCCM and the Roles created in App Portal. In some areas, however, the network was not yet capable of handling the increase in network traffic that virtualization generated.

At these sites, the staff deployed the Windows 7 operating system. To facilitate a switchover to VDI, the staff used an image that includes a recovery partition containing Windows 7 ThinPC and Citrix Receiver. When the network is upgraded and capable of supporting virtual desktops, IT will instruct the users on how to initiate the change from Windows 7 to ThinPC via App Portal. The user requests will trigger SCCM to deploy the VDI environment to the client, replacing Windows 7 with ThinPC.

Next Steps

The IT staff is continuing the rollout of SCCM and App Portal and, ultimately, the environment will make more than 200 applications and access to many network

resources such as shared folders and distribution lists, available for self-service access by approximately 10,000 users. "We're finding that App Portal is a big help in handling the SCCM rollout," Eschinger concludes. "What's more, it helps us be very efficient in dealing with emergency projects that come up—for example, the large integration project that we needed to do as a result of an acquisition."

In the future, the staff expects to more fully leverage the integration across AdminStudio and App Portal. As a result of this integration, application packagers will be able to publish applications directly to the App Portal catalog at the same time they publish to SCCM, ensuring rapid availability of migrated applications.

The staff is also working with redtoo to explore integration of the Flexera Software solutions with ServiceNow, which the service desk staff is using for ticketing. And, finally, IT has recently introduced an automated process for creating new users in AD. The staff envisions a complete new-hire onboarding process for which the final step is sending the user to App Portal to shop for the devices, software and other items required for the job.

About redtoo



redtoo is an IT service provider and consulting company with

more than 20 years of experience in the marketplace. Currently located in Switzerland, Austria and the U.S., redtoo has more than 140 employees providing IT solutions and services to clients in public sector institutions, small-to-mid-sized companies (SMBs) and global enterprises.

About Flexera Software

Flexera Software is the leading provider of strategic solutions for Application Usage Management; solutions delivering continuous compliance, optimized usage and maximized value to application producers and their customers. Flexera Software is trusted by more than 80,000 customers that depend on our comprehensive solutions—from installation and licensing, entitlement and compliance management to application readiness and software license optimization—to strategically manage application usage and achieve breakthrough results realized only through the systems-level approach we provide. For more information, please go to: www.flexerasoftware.com

Next Step:

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