

items GmbH

items GmbH cut desktop-management time by more than 60 percent with Micro Focus® ZENworks® Configuration Management.

Overview

items GmbH specialises in providing comprehensive IT services to support public-sector organisations throughout Germany. Headquartered in Münster, the firm has offices across Germany and employs 270 people.

Challenge

Many of items' clients are public utility companies that manage services such as public transportation and energy distribution for local citizens. Typically, the companies use a specialised software application to support each of these services. Because items manages the IT systems for dozens of service companies, each using its own set of applications, items' IT environment is highly complex and heterogeneous.

"We provide applications that support everything from delivering gas to making sure buses run on time," said Alexander Sommer, an IT

"Novell (now part of Micro Focus) listens closely to its customers and if we ever have problems, we know that we can turn to them for help."

ALEXANDER SOMMER

IT Solutions Architect
items GmbH

solutions architect at items. "Every time we win a new client, we must adopt a whole new range of IT systems."

"The success of our business hinges on our ability to manage our complex IT environment efficiently and effectively," Sommer said. "Minimising the amount of manual work involved in system administration is critical. Equally, since our clients are publicly funded, we must ensure that our IT services are cost-effective."

When items expanded its operations and set up a new branch, it began searching for a way to manage its desktop estate more efficiently.

Solution

Working with SCHIFFL, a service provider specialising in overcoming complexity-related infrastructure challenges, items decided to deploy ZENworks Configuration Management software.

"We had been using ZENworks Configuration Management to manage desktops at two of our other branches for around ten years," Sommer said. "We were extremely happy with the solution and decided to standardise on it as a single desktop management solution across our entire enterprise. Our partner SCHIFFL helped us to complete the deployment swiftly and seamlessly."



At a Glance

Industry

Computer Services

Location

Münster, Germany

Challenge

The growing company needed to reduce the manual work required to manage its complex, heterogeneous IT environment.

Solution

Use ZENworks Configuration Management to manage 5,000 client desktops in offices throughout Germany.

Results

- + Cut time spent on desktop management by approximately 60 percent
- + Accelerated Windows 7 migrations from several hours to just 30 minutes
- + Enabled fast, easy provisioning of new users

“As a conservative estimate, I think we spend 60 percent less time on desktop management thanks to ZENworks Configuration Management”

ALEXANDER SOMMER
IT Solutions Architect
items GmbH

items now uses ZENworks Configuration Management to manage 5,000 Windows PCs located in client offices all over Germany, managing tasks such as software distribution, remote management, and patch management.

“In my opinion, the greatest advantage of ZENworks Configuration Management over other tools is its ability to integrate natively with a huge range of applications, such as Microsoft Active Directory,” Sommer said. “This means that we can use the solution to manage our clients’ desktops regardless of which other systems they are using. We did not need to abandon our existing IT investments and start afresh; we just set up the solution and started using it straight away. We have total control from a single console—whereas in other tools, you may need to use multiple web clients.

“Novell (now part of Micro Focus) has worked hard to ensure that ZENworks Configuration Management includes a broad range of functionality to support our business. For example, we requested certain additional features for our environment, and Novell built them into the final product. Novell listens closely to its customers and if we ever have problems, we know that we can turn to them for help.”

When items needs to deploy new applications for its clients, it packages and delivers them automatically using ZENworks Configuration Management. Thus, the IT team spends less time on configuration and end users benefit from quick, trouble-free installation of their new software.

Results

ZENworks Configuration Management unlocked efficiency gains that were especially important when items decided to migrate its clients’ systems to Microsoft Windows 7.

“We had already migrated some of our users to Windows 7, and we wanted to bring the others onto the same version,” Sommer said. “Using automated distribution of packaged, standardised applications dramatically reduced the complexity of the process, enabling us to complete all of the migrations quickly and easily. In the past, Windows migrations took a few hours, but this one took only 30 minutes. Our clients could then download any necessary custom applications on a self-service basis.”

items also uses ZENworks Configuration Management to distribute software patches, enabling the company to maintain high levels of security and close loopholes quickly.

With ZENworks Configuration Management, items can manage its complex and heterogeneous IT environment much more efficiently than with its previous solution, and items has used these efficiency gains to its advantage.

“As a conservative estimate, I think we spend 60 percent less time on desktop management thanks to ZENworks Configuration Management,” Sommer said. “If we win new clients or our existing clients hire additional staff, we can provision workstations for the new users extremely quickly. Finding these kinds of savings enables us to offer high-quality IT services at competitive prices.”



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