Case Study: Bemis Company, Inc.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Bemis Company, Inc., is the largest flexible packaging company in the Americas and a major manufacturer of pressure sensitive materials used for labels, decoration, and signage. Bemis's network includes 5,000 workstations and servers running various versions of Windows and Windows Server.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Bemis had over 15,000 lines of KiXtart scripts to manage. KiXtart is a freeware scripting language used to configure desktops. Bemis's original scripts involved drive and printer mappings, registry changes, workstation lockdown, and software rollout.

MAKING THE DECISION

"With the advent of Windows NT and Windows 95, we had some limited policy files," recalled Bill Van Aacken, Senior IT Analyst at Bemis. "Microsoft kept extending the policy feature set for its Active Directory in Windows 2000 and 2003, but a lot of it was inflexible. PolicyMaker is able to add on to Group Policy, allowing you to do filtering within each policy, which gives you a similar flexibility to having a script. If you're on a notebook computer, you can set a value one way, or if you're on a server operating system, you can set the value another way, or for a desktop another way."

SOLUTION

Bemis is now using PolicyMaker™ Standard Edition to create detailed policies for their workstations and servers as they log on to the network. That enables the company to fine-tune the Group Policies it has set up within Microsoft Active Directory to better meet users' and Bemis's needs.

Bemis implemented PolicyMaker Standard Edition in March 2004 and has been using DesktopStandard's ProfileMaker® product since June 2001 to manage desktop e-mail profiles and configurations. "Bill's been a customer with us for a long time," said Joe L'Italien, Vice President of Sales at DesktopStandard Corporation. "We were happy to see Bemis move to PolicyMaker as they have moved to Active Directory. We see the increasing adoption of Group Policy closely following that of Active Directory, and PolicyMaker really helps companies leverage their investments in this area."

> "If you have 2,000 machines that are left on overnight, and the energy costs about $30 per machine for the year, you can effectively save $60,000 over the course of the year, which more than pays for the cost of the software. That's just your one-year return, and that's a low-end estimate."
>
> –**Bill Van Aacken**, Senior IT Analyst, Bemis Company, Inc.

CHALLENGES

- Reduce the need to manage and maintain 15,000 lines of KiXtart scripts
- Map drives, configure printers, update registry, lockdown workstations, rollout software
- Migrate from Microsoft Exchange 5.5 to Exchange 2003

SOLUTION

PolicyMaker™ Standard Edition

Key Extensions:

- Drive Maps extension
- Printers extension
- Registry extension
- Power Options extension
- Mail Profiles extension

BENEFITS

- 80% reduction in scripts
- Detailed policies created for machines as they log onto the network, mapping drives and configuring printers
- $30/computer saved each year through power management

policymaker™

"PolicyMaker enables Group Policy to do all kinds of automated desktop configuration," said DesktopStandard Sales Engineer Peter Beauregard. "The users can sit down and their e-mail is automatically configured for them when they log on to the machine, printers are connected based on the physical location of the user, power options are set, drive maps are configured—all from the familiar Group Policy Management Console in Active Directory."

BENEFITS

In version 2.0 of PolicyMaker Standard Edition, DesktopStandard more than doubled the features that could be configured, including power-saving options to enable companies to save money on their energy bills. The network administrator can set power-down parameters to shut down the screen after a specified period of inactivity such as 15 minutes or shut down the hard disk if it has been idle for a period such as an hour.

"If you have 2,000 machines that are left on overnight, and the energy costs around $30 per machine for the year, you can effectively save $60,000 over the course of the year, which more than pays for the cost of the software," commented Van Aacken. "That's just your one-year return, and that's a low-end estimate."

All of the Group Policy parameters are controlled through a console at the administrator's desk. "It's all GUI based," explained Van Aacken. "So if you need to change the local administrator password, you can put in the new password and it will replicate to all the policy controllers and apply it to all the machines, and ta-da—you've just rolled it out."

Van Aacken once needed to change a registry setting across all of the Windows 2003 computers at Bemis. He set PolicyMaker to filter on the version of the operating system and successfully changed the registry setting on only the intended systems.

Bemis plans to migrate its e-mail system in the near future from Microsoft Exchange 5.5 to Exchange 2003, and Van Aacken expects to use PolicyMaker to create Exchange 2003 policies on all of Bemis's machines.

Bemis had thousands of lines of script, and PolicyMaker has reduced the size of many of the scripts. Van Aacken has completed about 80% of the conversion of Bemis's lockdown script and is also in the midst of converting several other scripts. One script is over 300KB. He is aiming for about an 80% reduction in the number of lines in most scripts. "If we get better than 80%, that's great. But an 80% reduction is a large cost savings and increase in manageability," he said.

Because PolicyMaker leverages Group Policy and Active Directory, Bemis was able to deploy quickly with little impact on existing infrastructure. According to Van Aacken, "It couldn't have gone more smoothly, and the product has exceeded our initial expectations." Reduction of scripting was a major part of the attractiveness of PolicyMaker for Bemis, and the power management policy will lead to significant energy savings and a rapid return on investment.

PolicyMaker™ Standard Edition

PolicyMaker Standard Edition is a suite of more than twenty Group Policy extensions for desktop standardization, security, and compliance management—complimenting the native extensions provided with Microsoft Windows.

Group Policy is the extensible Change and Configuration Management (CCM) system built into Active Directory (AD) networks. Using PolicyMaker, organizations can eliminate scripts, reduce system imaging, standardize management, and better secure their networks.

For more information contact:

DesktopStandard Corporation

125 Brewery Lane, Bldg. 320
Portsmouth, NH 03801 USA

www.desktopstandard.com

+1 603-433-5885

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