

Company Profile: The Wilkinson Public Library provides library services to Telluride, a popular resort town in Colorado. The 20,000 square foot library was founded by Larry and Betty Wilkinson in 1974 and is visited nearly 250,000 times annually.

Website: www.telluridelibrary.org

Business Challenge: Using technology to provide innovative and new services to its patrons has always been part of Wilkinson Public Library's mission, ensuring that the population of Telluride and its visitors have access to the latest books, periodicals and other materials. However, monitoring, maintaining and protecting dozens of servers and workstations required to run a growing electronic catalogue as well as reliable Internet access and other online tools involves constant hands-on maintenance—time and resources that the county library simply can not provide.

Solution: Wilkinson Public Library deployed an automatic systems management solution from Kaseya that helps streamline basic administrative tasks like issuing a patch, deploying new software, monitoring for spyware, auditing inventory and conducting backups. The more efficient systems management strategy enables a single network administrator to efficiently manage the library's growing IT infrastructure by giving him complete visibility and access into all servers and workstations from a central Web-based management console. As a result, both employees and patrons have reliable access to the applications and services they need.

Kaseya Helps Colorado Town Expand Library Services

Wilkinson Public Library in Telluride, Colo., serves a dynamic population. In the off-season—mainly the fall and spring—the population of the resort town hovers around 2,500 people, expanding to more than 5,000 in the winter ski season and nearly as many during the summer hiking season. While permanent residents use the library as you would expect, vacationers take advantage of the organization's catalogue for summer reading, its Internet service to check email and its meeting rooms to log-in to 'can't miss' conference calls or simply to get away from the hustle and bustle of the family vacation.

As a result, the library has had to expand its IT infrastructure to handle the additional traffic as well as a series of new, innovative services aimed at making it easier for visitors to take advantage of everything the library has to offer. In addition to educating visitors that these services are available, ensuring that the services are reliable and provide the level of performance necessary to ensure a positive experience is paramount to the library's mission. However, making sure that the servers and workstations that support the systems are maintained, monitored, secured and backed up can be overwhelming.

Funded by the county government, the library must make do with a one-man IT staff. The organization's three networks—one for employees that run the basic functions of the library, one for patrons to access an electronic card catalogue, the Internet and other electronic services, and a third that runs the library's circulation applications in conjunction with other libraries in the region—require a lot of hands on maintenance to keep up and running.

"We were operating a sneaker-net," joked Joe Huff, network administrator, Wilkinson Public Library. "I literally had to walk around the library from system to system making sure it was updated with latest patches and there weren't any rogue software installed that was eating bandwidth or impacting performance. There was always something to do, somewhere to go. I felt like I was fighting a fire that would never go out."

As a result of the inconsistent systems management strategy, the availability and performance of systems suffered at times, hindering employee productivity and preventing patrons from accessing the library's services. Adding resources or additional staff wasn't an option, so Huff needed to find a way to streamline his job and the systems management process.

Proactive, Preventative Systems Management

Wilkinson Public Library deployed an automatic systems management solution from Kaseya that gives Huff complete visibility and access into every workstation and server on the network from a central Web-based management console. Through the solution's integrated interface, Huff is able to automate basic administrative tasks like patch management, software deployment, monitoring, endpoint security, auditing functions and backup in a coordinated effort to keep the systems up to date, secure and running optimally.

"Sneaker-net is completely gone, replaced by a coordinated and proactive systems management strategy," Huff said. "I can do anything to these systems from my desk, or from home, short of breaking them open."

Kaseya's scripting agent allows Huff to automate systems management, eliminating much of the redundancy that took up most of his time. For example, he can download a new Windows patch, test it on a machine locally, and then push it out automatically to all the other systems with the touch of a button. Previously, Huff would have had to physically visit each computer and manually download and install the patch. A process that used to take up to a week now takes minutes.

The help desk and monitoring functions are also streamlined, helping to organize and prioritize Huff's schedule throughout the day. As he comes in to work in the morning, Kaseya spits out a report outlining all events that occurred overnight, complete with recommendation on what should take precedence. Issues that occur during the workday are now resolved in seconds, rather than hours, helping to avoid unnecessary downtime and increasing overall productivity.

"The alerting system allows me to do preventative maintenance," he said. "Often, I'm able to head off potential availability and performance issues before they become worse or lead to downtime. I don't have to wait until the end user is affected."

Kaseya also enables transparent visibility into the network, giving Huff the tools to better allocate bandwidth between systems and improving the performance of mission critical systems. The solution identifies performance-sapping applications and either automatically deletes the program or send out an alert. Because the library has a lot of turnover, and many people share workstations, the systems tend to get cluttered with unwanted and unused software. Kaseya prevents this from sapping drive space and bandwidth.

Huff also uses Kaseya's scripting agent to maintain the consistency of each system, ensuring that each workstation is online and running properly. After a user logs off, the script automatically rebuilds the desktop in case any icons or shortcuts are deleted or unwanted applications have been added, returning the workstation to its original state, ready for the next login.

Reliable Application Performance and Availability

As a result of implementing a consistent systems management strategy throughout the organization, the library's workstations and servers are healthier and perform better, giving employees and its patrons reliable, seamless access to the library's applications. Administrators can manage inventory, create spine labels and check out books seamlessly while visitors can browse the catalogue and surf the Internet from reliable workstations throughout the building. Performance of systems will never be an inhibitor for anyone trying to access one of the library's services.

Proactive systems maintenance provided by the Kaseya solution allows Huff to protect systems without going too far and inhibiting productivity or access. Before, Huff may have had to disable all downloads on Internet-enabled computers to make sure spyware wasn't accidentally downloaded or other unwanted applications couldn't take up valuable hard drive space. Now, Huff can take a closer look at each instance and make a judgment call based on the specifics of the case. For example, someone at the reference desk may need to download an instant messenger application to assist a patron via a real time communication tool. In addition, patrons have seen their permissions expanded so they can download applications they may temporarily need—a Flash player, an MP3 player, etc—because Kaseya automatically detects and cleanses each system after every use.

Key Benefits

- Library patrons have reliable access to an expanding card catalogue and other basic services onsite
- Patrons can access new online services like re-checking out books, reserving a meeting room, inquire on the status of a book and apply for a library card
- Library employees have reliable access to accurate inventory, labeling and other mission-critical applications
- The library is able to provide a technology lab on premises where instructors can teach graphic design, Web development and other computer classes
- A network administrator is able to ensure the health of all systems on the network in a fraction of the time it used to take manually

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The additional bandwidth has allowed the library to extend its online services without adding more servers. Now, patrons can sign up for a library card, browse the catalogue, reserve meeting rooms, inquire about inventory currently available and re-check out books online. These innovative services weren't as effective prior to Huff managing the infrastructure more efficiently, the extra bandwidth ensuring that the services are always available and working properly.

About Kaseya

Kaseya is a global provider of IT automation software for IT solution providers and corporate IT organizations that benefit from deploying Kaseya's systems management capabilities. Kaseya allows businesses to proactively manage distributed IT infrastructure easily and efficiently with one integrated Web-based platform. Kaseya's technology has been deployed on over 1 million machines in more than 25 countries around the world.

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