

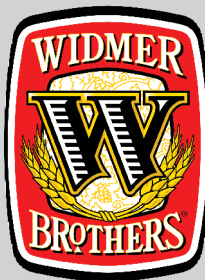
**Company: Widmer Brothers Brewing**

Kurt and Rob Widmer founded Widmer Brothers Brewing in 1984 in Portland, Ore., honing their craft and passion into one of the leading craft breweries in America. Widmer is known for its award-winning Hefeweizen and for introducing seasonal beers in the US.

**Website:** [www.widmer.com](http://www.widmer.com)

**Business Challenge:** Widmer Brothers Brewing maintains a 24x7 brewing and distribution cycle, ensuring fresh, quality Widmer beer is always available in bars and restaurants around the country. This delicate supply chain is dependent on one thing: giving employees reliable access to the business applications they need to keep the product moving. However, a distributed workforce makes it difficult to ensure the performance and availability of all systems on the network, preventing employees from remotely accessing the company's brewing, communications and financial solutions.

**Solution:** On the advice from its managed service provider, Polar Systems, Widmer deployed a remote and automatic systems management solution from Kaseya. The solution gives the IT staff complete visibility and access into the company's servers and distributed systems and automates basic administrative tasks like patch management, performance monitoring and inventory auditing. By proactively managing all systems on the network, Widmer is able to meet performance and availability service levels, ensuring employees have access to mission-critical business applications.

**Kaseya Enables Distributed Supply Chain for Regional Brewer**

The saddest day of Norm Peterson's life was the day the tap ran dry. The lovable Cheers character who spent nearly every day at the end of the bar was an easy person to please. Just keep 'em coming, Sammy. It seemed that what protected Norm from going crazy from his nagging wife and repetitive job was the reliable distribution system of the local brewery. As long as beer continued to be brewed and bottled consistently and shipped to Cheers' doorstep every day, he was happy.

Such is the mission of Widmer Brothers Brewing Company in Portland, Ore. The company's 200 employees dedicate themselves to maintaining a 24x7 brewing and distribution cycle, ensuring fresh, quality Widmer beer is always available in bars and restaurants around the country. This delicate supply chain is dependent on one thing: giving employees reliable access to the business applications they need to keep the product moving.

The master brewer needs 24x7 access to the company's brewing system called Brew-Max that helps him oversee the entire brewing process using time-honored recipes for Widmer's three brands – Widmer Hefeweizen, Drop Top Amber Ale and Broken Halo IPA – as well as three seasonal brews. On the other end of the spectrum, Widmer's regional sales force needs access to email and calendar features to meet local distributors who stock bars and restaurants. And the support staff – who must ensure that supplies are purchased and delivered regularly and bills are paid on time – has to log on to the company's inventory and accounting applications.

"All these applications are absolutely mission-critical to Widmer Brothers Brewing," said Scott Urbatsch, director of IT for the brewery. "And it's my job to make sure they have access to these systems 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's central to the business."

One of the biggest inhibitors to application availability is the distributed nature of Widmer's employees. The sales force is spread out around the country, working out of the Portland brewery only one week a year for its annual sales meeting. Typically, the IT staff takes this time to run diagnostic checks on all remote devices like laptops and PDAs to make sure there are no issues with performance, availability or security. However, with nearly 50 sales people in town for only a week, Urbatsch – who runs a team of two—is crunched for time. By his estimate, it is unlikely he's able to catch everything that could turn into a problem down the road. In addition, being able to manage systems less than one-fiftieth of the year is a major liability.

"Faced with steady growth and an increasingly distributed workforce, we needed to come up with a better way to manage our remote systems," Urbatsch said. "I needed to find a tool that would enable me to touch every server and computer on the network at any time."

**Streamline IT Administration and Enable Remote Management**

On the recommendation from its managed service provider, Polar Systems, Widmer deployed a remote and automatic systems management solution from Kaseya. The solution immediately gave Urbatsch and Polar's systems administrators a complete view of all systems in the network from a central management console, regardless of physical location of the system. Through this new visibility into the network and by automating basic administrative tasks, Polar was able to institute a proactive management strategy, enabling its administrators to head off potential problems before they became major performance or availability pains.

“Kaseya really took a lot of the basic administration out of managing Widmer’s IT environment,” said Ken Colton, director of operations, Polar Systems. “This allowed us to focus on a more incident-based business model and better prepared us to handle Widmer’s geographic growth.”

Through the Kaseya solution, Urbatsch is able to monitor the health of remote systems, upload the latest software updates and ensure that the systems are patched regularly. He’s also able to automate basic tasks to increase performance like regular defrag and anti-spyware scans. When remote employees call with IT issues, Urbatsch is able to take control of their system, eliminating the communication barrier that is normally associated with help desk phone calls.

“The automation features dramatically reduce the complexity of our environment,” Urbatsch said. “It saves me hours each week by eliminating repetitive tasks and giving me a complete inventory and snapshot of the current state of the network.”

Urbatsch also leverages Kaseya’s systems management features to proactively manage Widmer’s data center in Portland. The brewery’s mission-critical business applications – BrewMax, Exchange and SQL-based financial solutions – run on 17 Windows servers that are closely monitored by the Kaseya agents. Urbatsch has set up a system of alerts that let him know if performance drops below the acceptable service level or if a server is under- or over-utilized. He can then analyze the event log to determine any trends, helping improve the overall performance and availability of the servers.

## Remote Application Availability Enables Supply Chain

As a result of Widmer’s proactive systems management strategy and a drastic improvement in application availability, the brewery’s employees are able to access the tools they need to keep fresh, quality beer flowing from Portland to taps across the country. Widmer’s supply chain can continue uninterrupted, and Norm Peterson, the proverbial beer drinker, can rest assured that he’ll always be able to sidle up to the local bar for cool, refreshing beverage.

Thanks to Kaseya’s remote capabilities, Widmer engineers are able to support the master brewer by keeping tabs on the brewing equipment and software at any time from anywhere with an internet connection. This ensures that the brew master has access to BrewMax and can make sure gauges are at the right temperature and the Widmer brothers’ closely guarded recipes

### Key Benefits

- The IT staff is able to remotely monitor and access servers and distributed systems regardless of physical location, ensuring 24x7 application availability and systems health
- The master brewer has seamless access to the brewing system, allowing him to monitor the delicate brewing process at any time without disruption
- The sales force has reliable access to email and calendar features, allowing them to maintain an aggressive meeting schedule with distributors
- The support staff is able to purchase supplies, pay invoices and process distributor payments in a timely manner

After the successful deployment at Widmer, Polar Systems has since implemented Kaseya at the majority of its other customer sites. By automating basic IT tasks and by providing visibility into its customers’ environments from a central location, Polar is able to proactively manage its customer environments from a central management console, streamlining IT service and enabling it to re-brand itself as a managed service provider. Polar Systems can now provide a consistent service to its customers at a predictive price rather than bill by the hour through inconsistent monthly retainers.

As a result of increasing the efficiency of its systems administrators, Polar Systems—a company that always keeps its eye on the bottom line—has been able to dramatically increase its profit margins as it expands. Colton estimates that his administrators are now able to deliver support services that generate revenue greater than three times Polar’s payroll expense, a milestone that remained elusive prior to discovering the Kaseya solution.

are being followed to the letter. In addition, the engineers can conduct maintenance remotely during scheduled downtime – at 3 a.m. for example – without an on-site engineer present.

In addition, Widmer’s sales force is able to rely on the company’s IT infrastructure to get them to sales calls and marketing events on time through reliable access to the company’s Exchange environment. Kaseya also allows them to remotely file regional sales reports, giving managers more visibility into each region without having to fly all over the country or rely on verbal communication from reps.

The Kaseya solution also enables Widmer to continue its aggressive geographic growth strategy. Previously, it was a pain to track company-issued equipment and provision new systems for recently hired employees. Through Kaseya’s powerful inventory tracking features, Urbatsch is able to keep a reliable repository of all systems on the network and track serial numbers, chip performance, RAM size, capacity and the version of Windows and other software it is running. When a new employee comes aboard, it is easy to tailor their new laptop to business need and load the appropriate software. Likewise, it is easy to identify older systems that may need to be replaced.

“Kaseya is so central to our day-to-day operations, I don’t know what I would do without it,” Urbatsch said. “It’s not only a time-saver for the IT staff, but it really enables the way we brew and sell our beer.”

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-- Scott Urbatsch, director of IT, Widmer Brothers Brewing