

»» Streamlined IT Support



Successful IT department mergers

Honeywell is a technology and manufacturing leader that employs around 120,000 people in 95 countries worldwide. Its business extends from aerospace products and services through control technologies for buildings, automotive products and power generation systems, to speciality chemicals, fibers and plastics.

Following a merger with AlliedSignal Inc. in 1999, the new Honeywell restructured both companies' IT departments. One of the key projects within this process was the move towards centralized help desk services for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). In order to make this feasible, Honeywell decided to introduce LANDesk Management Suite throughout the EMEA region.

Centralized control of 17,000 machines in 43 countries

"With around 300 sites to support in 43 countries, we were looking for a remote management capability that would allow us to centrally control a network of 17,000 machines," explains Roy Copping, Manager of Distributed Computing, Technology Standards and Planning for Honeywell EMEA.

"LANDesk Management Suite had already been successfully deployed on 30,000 desktops in our U.S. operation, so we knew it could do the job in terms of performance and scalability. We also had experience of using it in three EMEA locations."

Seventy-five percent reduction in desktop visits

Remote control is critically important to Honeywell's desktop support strategy. Many of the company's larger sites provide help desk and on-site services to an average of eight to 10 smaller ones. Some of these sites are located up to two hours' drive away from the main office. Distance can even be a problem on single large sites, such as chemical plants, where it may take an engineer 15 minutes to reach an employee's desk.

Honeywell chose to install LANDesk Management Suite servers in 31 main sites in EMEA, known as "clusters." This allows the Honeywell help desks to fix the majority of desktop problems remotely in the smaller sites. The LANDesk solution has had a dramatic effect on help desk productivity. Darren Wright, a Technical Architect in Distributed Computing, Technology Standards and Planning, takes up the story.

Business Needs

- Remote control to improve help desk efficiency and reduce desktop support costs
- Better inventory management for 17,000 PCs
- More efficient software distribution

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite

Business Benefits

- Reducing engineer travel time increases help desk productivity
- Decreasing travel expense and network downtime results in IT support cost saving
- Realize immediate ROI by implementing a Pan-European asset database to streamline "technology-refresh-program" and "software upgrades"



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ROY COPPING

MANAGER OF DISTRIBUTED COMPUTING
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“We are seeing a huge reduction in the amount of travelling time for local technicians. The cluster in Brussels, Belgium supports five smaller sites as well as the European headquarters. Before we deployed LANDesk Management Suite, an engineer would visit each site for a full day each week. Now, on average, an engineer visits once every four weeks. Brussels is handling all other problems remotely.”

Reducing downtime

“We want to eliminate visits to the desktop whenever possible,” Roy Copping continues. “LANDesk Management Suite plays a major role here by allowing us to solve problems remotely. This improves our efficiency and the quality of service we offer to our customers.”

These customers include administrative staff, remote workers and engineers. For all of them, the PC is an essential communications tool.

Roy Copping adds: “A great deal of Honeywell’s business is about supporting our customers through service. Help desk engineers are spending less time travelling and more time fixing problems, so we know that the LANDesk solution is already reducing downtime.”

Thirty to forty percent efficiency gains

Longer-term, first-line desktop support in EMEA is being transferred to a “virtual” help desk service located in Belgium, France, Germany or the UK. With the help of LANDesk Management Suite, Honeywell aims to solve 70 percent of all problems logged by the help desk on the first call. “We are trying to achieve the help desk’s ‘holy grail’ of increasing the productivity of our technicians without increasing our support costs,” says Roy Copping. “The LANDesk solution is one of the main tools being deployed as part of our pan-European strategy to reach a 30 to 40 percent improvement in the ratio of PCs-to-technician support.”

Inventory control proves to be a real asset

Inventory control is a key area in which LANDesk Management Suite has quickly proved its worth.

Before deploying the LANDesk solution, Honeywell had no single, consistent source of information about the hardware and software used on an estimated 10,000 PCs and 7,000 laptops in EMEA. Yet there was an urgent need for a more streamlined asset management system for projects such as software upgrades that often require specific hardware configurations.

LANDesk Management Suite offered an ideal solution. Honeywell has used it to create a full database of each country’s assets in a standard format, giving help desk teams instant access to whatever information they need.

Regional databases have also been combined into a single datamart for the whole EMEA region. This, says Roy Copping, allows Honeywell to manage its vast distributed network from a central point.

“It’s impossible to place a value on the rapid access to accurate data that we get from LANDesk Management Suite,” he comments. “Our country leaders – the people responsible for help desk services throughout EMEA – are extremely enthusiastic about this capability because it saves their teams so much time.”

Software distribution in minutes

Belgium was one of the first countries to reap the benefits of this new system. A specific hardware configuration was needed for an upgrade to the SAP ERP application. Relevant details of PC readiness for the upgrade would previously have been gathered manually. The Brussels team used LANDesk Management Suite to automate this task, then to distribute the new software to all suitable PCs.

The upgrade went like clockwork. In fact, the process was so easy that the help desk even included one site not originally scheduled for upgrade. A report from Brussels notes: "We have also done a client roll-out to Eupen (it only takes a few minutes with LANDesk Management Suite). If you want us to remove it, that is no problem; we can just reverse the command."

Reduced installation time from 19 to 3 hours

Software distribution will take on an increasingly prominent role in EMEA. The merger with AlliedSignal left Honeywell with dual standards for applications such as web browsers. As the company consolidates on single standards, help desks will distribute new software to thousands of PCs using LANDesk Management Suite.

In Brussels – one of the first sites to use the LANDesk solution – the help desk team ran early tests on small-scale software distribution. They also calculated the amount of time they had saved. Darren Wright quotes the figures: "Before using LANDesk Management Suite, it took approximately 19 hours to install a utility package on 38 machines. Now it takes only three hours. A sales package that we used to install in 16.5 hours can now be distributed in two. This means we stand to make colossal time savings on large-scale roll-outs."

Immediate return on investment

The LANDesk solution is also transforming the management of Honeywell's technology-refresh-program for PCs that runs on a three-year replacement cycle across all EMEA countries. Now help desk staff can identify almost instantaneously which machines are due to be replaced and where they are located.

The LANDesk solution has more than lived up to expectations during the deployment. Darren Wright has been particularly pleased with its ease of use – an intuitive design and interface have reduced training for local help desk teams from days to hours.

"This is good news for the deployment team because it means that local staff can complete their installations while we move on to the next site," he reports. "It also means that each country can start to get a return on the investment immediately."

The last word goes to Roy Copping: "There was never any doubt that LANDesk Management Suite could deliver the functionality we needed. As the LANDesk solution comes on-stream across EMEA, we are ramping up to exploit it to the full and achieve our targets for efficiency gains, cost savings and improved customer service."

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