

»» High Quality Service at Lower Cost



Reputation for quality

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) covers an area of over 68 square miles with a population of about 205,000. It has a reputation throughout the UK for being a well-managed and innovative council that is dedicated to providing quality services – not only to its residents but also to its employees.

In 1998 it became obvious to Hilary Staton, Desktop Manager in the IT division, that the council needed to find a better way to service the needs of its growing number of PC users. She started looking for a network management tool that would provide remote problem solving, network-based distribution of software fixes and upgrades, and accurate inventory reporting for both hardware and software. LANDesk® Management Suite proved to be the ideal solution.

An outright winner

Hilary Staton takes up the story: “Prior to using LANDesk Management Suite, most support involved an engineer personally visiting a user, whether it was just to solve a simple query or to install a new piece of software. We have two main sites twenty minutes apart, plus several other smaller locations, so users often had to wait for long periods during which they were unproductive.

“Besides being able to handle helpdesk queries remotely, I also wanted a centralised software distribution system. And last but not least, I needed a product that would give me dynamic hardware and software inventories.”

Hilary Staton looked at three products, but only LANDesk Management Suite satisfied all her criteria.

Its installation was completed in September 1999, and it now monitors between 1,700 and 1,800 PCs on the Solihull network.

Seventy-five percent reduction in desktop visits

The first tangible benefit of the LANDesk solution was a vast improvement in response times to users’ calls for help. Before the software was installed, an engineer would have to visit each user to investigate and fix a problem. That could take several hours, leaving people unproductive while they waited. The majority of problems are now fixed very quickly.

Business Needs

- Maintain high service levels to a rapidly increasing number of users at various locations with a small support team
- Reduce IT overheads

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite

Business Benefits

- Faster response to user problems
- Increased productivity for users and support staff
- Automated software distribution reduces visits to users
- Accurate software and hardware inventories save on software licences, save on project planning time and help to produce statistics more quickly
- Savings on travel time and costs

“Another major benefit for me, is that I can provide accurate planning statistics to the departments I support much more quickly and easily.”

HILARY STATON
 DESKTOP MANAGER
 IT DIVISION
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When a call comes into the helpdesk, it is logged and passed to an engineer. The support engineer then uses LANDesk Management Suite to remotely control the user’s system to identify and fix the fault. Users are back to work more quickly and engineers spend less time in transit, so they can help more people.

Automated software distribution

New application rollouts at Solihull MBC are now much simpler. Previously, an engineer would have to visit all potential users—usually hundreds—to check on the status of their PCs and see if they had enough memory and disk space to run the package. Any necessary hardware updates then had to be ordered; it took another visit to install them and yet another to install the software.

Today, LANDesk Management Suite supplies an up-to-date inventory of the hardware and software on each machine. As a result, when a major new application is planned, the status of every machine can be reviewed, the necessary hardware upgrades ordered well in advance, and, where appropriate, the software distributed centrally via the network. Support staff can even deploy regular software fixes and updates remotely, after hours, using a laptop from home.

“Another major benefit for me,” adds Hilary Staton, “is that I can provide accurate planning statistics to the departments I support much more quickly and easily.”

Spreading the benefits

Having realised the benefits of LANDesk Management Suite for her own support team, Hilary Staton decided to share them with others. She says: “We have now given all our department IT representatives access to LANDesk Management Suite via a Web console so that they can get a more accurate picture of what is happening in their own areas.”

With tight security controls in place to protect information, the LANDesk solution has enabled the departments to provide first-level assistance to users, especially on their own specialist applications. This has reduced not only the departmental workloads, but also that of the central support team.

Return on investment

Hilary Staton is convinced she made the right decision in selecting LANDesk Management Suite: “The savings we made were significant enough to pay for the investment very quickly. The most obvious was in people time for both users and engineers. Savings on project planning time have also been significant.”

An optimistic future

The LANDesk solution has many features that Hilary Staton wants to explore more fully. Her plans include extending the use of alerts to keep an even closer eye on all the systems on the network. In the meantime, she is more than happy with the benefits delivered to date.

“LANDesk Management Suite has helped us to make more productive use of our time, and service an increasing number of users without additional support staff. We couldn't manage without it now,” Hilary Staton concludes.

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DESKTOP MANAGER

IT DIVISION

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Corporate Headquarters

698 West 10000 South
Suite 500
South Jordan, Utah 84095

www.landesk.com

FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION

U.S. and Canada + 1-800-982-2130
Europe + 44 (0) 118-902-6200
Ireland + 353-1-469-3726
Japan + 81 (3) 3435-8261
Brazil + (55-11) 3048-4080
Mexico + 52-55-5261-4340
China + 8610-8518-3138

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