

Still GmbH

Still GmbH standardizes its IT infrastructure with Enteo solutions

CUSTOMER PROFILE

INDUSTRY

Industrial Manufacturing

CHALLENGE

- Automating the distribution of applications and operating systems
- Standardizing the IT infrastructure for a more flexible and prompt response to customer requirements
- Increasing economic efficiency by reducing costs and relieving support staff

SOLUTION

- Enteo NetInstall, Enteo Inventory, and Enteo OSD (Operation System Deployment)
- Outsourcing provisioning processes to external service providers

RESULT

- Almost complete alleviation of the data center through client provisioning
- Reduction in the number of trouble tickets and relief of support staff

The Still company, launched by Hans Still in 1920 with much creativity, entrepreneurship and quality, has developed into one of the most innovative providers of comprehensive services. Today the name Still stands for forklifts, carts, and haulers as well as cutting-edge storage technology and future-oriented services. In Europe alone, more than 6,000 qualified employees in research and development, production, sales, and service work together to meet customer demands worldwide. The key to the company's success is found in highly efficient products, which range from comprehensive industry-specific offers for large and small operations to computer-controlled logistics programs for effective inventory and material flow management. Since September 2006 Still GmbH has been part of the KION Group, which also includes the Linde and OM brands.

The material handling data center at the company's headquarters in Hamburg is responsible for the trouble-free provision of fat clients and thin clients within Still's internationally disseminated infrastructure. Here, approximately 450 servers are hosted for all locations, 6,000 SAP users are managed, and three SAP systems are operated for Still, Linde, and the Italian OM. Second level user support is also handled by the data center team which consists of 25 technical and non-technical staff.

As a highly developed company, Still's IT landscape features extremely heterogeneous hardware and software. The team led by Jürgen Rüllicke, Manager of Infrastructure & Operating at KION Information Management Services GmbH, counted 180 applications alone on 4,000 fat clients, whereby individual installations were not taken into account. A similar picture was drawn by the hardware which came from various manufacturers and included components of differing generations.

This situation had a noticeably negative impact on the economic efficiency, the setting up of new PCs, and the speed of support. For provisioning, countless images had to be taken covering every combination of applications as well as 40 different language versions. Additionally, it was necessary to replicate the images at the international locations so that they could be available

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locally. For this reason, Still decided in 2005 to radically standardize its IT landscape. As a result it was decided to phase out image-based client provisioning.



"We were getting close to a situation of obsolescence. To maintain an acceptable technical standard for around 4,000 fat clients would have meant exchanging about 1,000 PCs annually," explains Jürgen Rüllicke. "This would have over-extended the capacity of our team and would not have been possible using images. For this reason, our goal was to create a standardized infrastructure that would enable a more flexible and quicker response to customer requirements, while at the same time increasing economic efficiency."

For Still, the first step towards efficient IT infrastructure management was to standardize its applications. Together with technical departments, a catalog was created of truly productive and necessary applications. This enabled a reduction to 60 necessary applications company-wide, including all the plugins for the operating system. Furthermore, Still discontinued its use of burdensome images and turned to automated application and operating system distribution using Enteo NetInstall and Enteo OSD (Operating System Deployment). Decisive for Enteo was not only self-conducted evaluations, but also the excellent experience enjoyed by Linde Material Handling GmbH in Aschaffenburg, a subsidiary that has been working with Enteo for years.

As the infrastructure was being implemented and the software packages created, KION Information Manage-

ment Services was supported by Enteo's business partner NWC Services GmbH, which had already proved its high level of expertise in the area of software management with projects in other parts of the company. From creating packages to installations to hardware procurement and set-up, Still has outsourced the entire provisioning process to external service providers. An order portal is available to the technical departments which can be used to indicate needs to the material handling data center. By placing an order in the SAP system, in which PCs have a basic configuration for each workstation profile, the order is automatically forwarded to service providers. These service providers assume the responsibility for procurement, configuring the Still system using Enteo NetInstall infrastructure, and supplying the final client.

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Jürgen Rüllicke explains this decision: "As a machine manufacturer, we are very familiar with the concept of the 'extended workbench.' Using optimized processes and the expertise of specialized service providers, we can achieve a very high level of economic efficiency. A realistic target is a cost factor of 30 euros per installed client."

In order to increase effectiveness even more, an increasing number of applications are being made available via the Citrix XenApp™. The goal is to cover 90 percent of applications using Citrix XenApp™. Here Still benefits from an advantage of the Enteo platform which has already convinced Linde Material Handling. With Enteo, FrontRange is the only manufacturer to make it possible to integrate both Citrix Thin Clients and classic Windows PCs under one management. Furthermore, using the Enteo Management Suite for Citrix XenApp, Still is also in the position to consolidate all management operations for the growing number of Citrix servers.

“The standardization of the IT infrastructure and the centralized application distribution with Enteo have already enabled Still to gain distinct benefits in terms of economic efficiency and flexibility. Without this step, we would not be able to fulfill the requirements of an international company,” explains Jürgen Rülcke. “Today, the data center team has been almost completely relieved of the tasks of client provisioning and can now dedicate their time to more important tasks.”

At the same time, according to Jürgen Rülcke, the number of trouble tickets has been considerably reduced. This has been mostly attributable to smooth installations using Enteo NetInstall, which offers significant advantages over images when considering the various language versions. Through centralized distribution using Enteo NetInstall, Still also received precise data about the application profile of every single client, which then also benefits support.

PARTNER PROFILE

Within the context of this project, Still GmbH has been supported by NWC Services GmbH, an Enteo business partner, which is a highly specialized provider of comprehensive, integrated client management solutions and highquality services ranging from expert consulting in all aspects of software management to the development of customized versions of standard products.



Conclusion

Enteo NetInstall, Enteo Inventory, and Enteo OSD are now permanent parts of daily IT operations at Still – but this does not mean an end to development. It is planned, for example, to introduce the Enteo web portal in order to improve the effectiveness of first-level support. The Enteo web portal enables, for example, the uncomplicated initiation of repair installations by support staff, whereby first-call resolution rates will be able to be increased further. In addition, the Enteo web portal establishes a secure basis for shifting the request and installation of necessary applications to the most part to the technical departments – providing a considerable opportunity for further reducing expenditure and increasing user satisfaction.

As Jürgen Rüllicke confirms, FrontRange Solutions will continue to be a Still partner in the future: “In working with Still, Enteo has proved itself completely and fulfilled our expectations. We can therefore only underline the positive experience already enjoyed by our colleagues from the KION Group. The economic and technological advantages of centralized application and OS distribution using Enteo are plainly evident, especially for a company with diverse locations. We will therefore continue with Enteo down the path we have forged.”

About FrontRange Solutions

FrontRange Solutions develops software and services that growing mid-size firms and distributed enterprises rely on every day to build great customer relationships and deliver high-quality customer service. The company applies a unique combination of innovation and automation with a standards-based approach to simplify core business processes, including: IT service management; customer relationship and sales force management; and PC lifecycle management. More than 150,000 of the world's best-known brands use FrontRange offerings to quickly improve their interactions with external and internal clients and achieve better business results. For more information please visit www.frontrange.com



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