/Keeping devices connected at KCOM Group

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Lorrayne Smith, Team Leader
Distributed Systems
KCOM Group

/ INDUSTRY:

Corporate

/ PLATFORMS:

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

The KCOM Group provides a range of communications services to organisations and consumers across the UK and is listed on the London Stock Exchange. With 2,000 employees working across nine different locations, keeping track of IT endpoints such as laptops and desktops is difficult at best. At worst, it becomes a drain on company resources and a big data security risk.

BACKGROUND

The Group's IT team took the decision to refresh the company's IT estate, which included 1,100 laptops and 900 desktops. The team chose to lease the hardware, rather than buy it outright. Leasing is a common choice when it comes to the acquisition of new corporate hardware. The main advantage is that the cost is spread throughout the lifecycle of the hardware and it allowed the Group to refresh a larger proportion of its estate.

THE CHALLENGE

The other element to leasing agreements is that the company leasing the devices does not have full ownership of the hardware and, at the end of the contract, must return the hardware to the vendor. As a result, the IT team at KCOM Group had to take extra care to ensure they could track the whereabouts of their IT assets – particularly as laptops are more prone to being lost or stolen.

THE SOLUTION

To better manage the leased hardware, the Group's IT team decided that Absolute should be activated on all new computers. "We always knew that if we decided to lease, there would come a time when all of our IT assets would need to be managed centrally," said Lorrayne Smith, Distributed Systems Team Leader at KCOM Group. The IT team was impressed by how easy Absolute is to use and how quickly it located missing laptops.

"Keeping track of employees' laptops can be a nightmare in terms of administration and organisation, and that's before you've made allowances for human error. No matter how hard you try, it is inevitable that laptops will occasionally be misplaced," Lorrayne continued.

/ABSOLUTE™

Absolute DDS is able to pinpoint a laptop's location as soon as it connects to the internet, so KCOM Group is now able to quickly identify a missing machine and know precisely where it can be retrieved from.

Persistence® technology from Absolute is embedded in the core of most devices by at the time of manufacture. Once the Absolute software agent is activated by a company's IT administrator, Persistence technology is activated. Persistence triggers an automatic reinstallation if an Absolute software agent is removed from a device which means that IT can access information about the device, regardless of user or location. This information is regularly updated as the software client 'checks in' with the Absolute Monitoring Centre every 24 hours.

'PC drift' can be a big problem: when people leave the company or computers simply change locations internally, the IT team is often the last to know. Within KCOM Group, the team minimises PC drift by using information obtained from the Absolute Customer Centre to determine when a computer has not been used for some time. Absolute's endpoint security offers comprehensive asset inventory enabling the team to track and secure unused devices.

"For example, we had a challenge when engineers would be sent a replacement laptop if they had a fault. Sometimes it could take a long time for the faulty laptop to be returned once the engineer had a working laptop," stated Lorrayne.

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The team implemented Absolute as new devices were purchased over a period of approximately six months. "Needless to say, the new computers went down extremely well with employees," continued Lorrayne. "However, what's made the biggest difference to the IT team has been the ability to find out exactly what hardware is out there and who is using it."

RESULTS

EFFICIENT ASSET INVENTORY
Ability to collect accurate and comprehensive information about device location and status

IMPROVED LIFECYCLE PROCESSES FOR LEASED DEVICES
Security and efficiencies were improved throughout the lifecycle of the leased devices

CONFIDENCE IN DATA SECURITY
Mislaid or unused devices can be remotely secured and located

For more information about Absolute solutions please visit:
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