

Baylor University

An Education in Asset Management and Help Desk Services



Chartered in 1845 by the Republic of Texas and affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Baylor is the oldest institution of higher learning in the state and the largest Baptist university in the world. While remaining true to its heritage, Baylor has grown to almost 14,000 students, offering 46 baccalaureate, 73 masters and 22 doctoral degree programs. To support its mission to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service, Baylor employs approximately 2,200 faculty and staff members across the university's 735-acre main campus in Waco, as well as its other school and administrative offices located in Dallas and Houston. To help ensure that these dispersed faculty and staff members can leverage the technology resources needed to do their jobs, Baylor enrolls the services of LANDesk® Management Suite to increase support staff productivity by 400%, and to deliver vital IT asset management and budget planning reports in minutes rather than weeks.

Connect, Solve, and Save

The 25 employees that make up the ITS – Client Services team at Baylor have responsibility for more than 5,300 workstations located at the university's different facilities. When any of these nodes experience problems, their users can't afford to waste time waiting for a technician to show up to fix it. They have classes to teach, syllabi to prepare, research to finish, and countless other worries that don't include "why won't my PC work?" The remote control capability provided by LANDesk® Management Suite not only eliminates the wait, but in most cases it eliminates the need to even visit the PC.

"LANDesk® remote control saves our helpdesk an exponential amount of time," says Michael Gonzales, systems analyst programmer at Baylor University. "In the time that it would take you to travel all the way across campus to help a single person, you can remote control four other users' machines, not too mention how many you can do in the time it takes to drive the two hours to fix a problem at one of our remote sites. With remote control, you instantly connect and the problem's solved."

Gonzales estimates that being able to remote control with LANDesk Management Suite eliminates about 100 visits a day that IT services would otherwise have to make to fix problems experienced by its computer users. It also means that most problems can be resolved on the first call. But LANDesk also plays a vital role in addressing those calls that require escalation as well. Not only does the second line support team use remote control in LANDesk Management Suite to solve problems, but the team also relies on it to help them diagnose the problem before they even talk to the customer.

Support technicians enter escalated calls into Baylor's HEAT call tracking and support system. By tying the LANDesk Management Suite inventory reporting capabilities to the HEAT system, second-line support members can see a complete inventory breakdown of the problem PC in advance. "When they get a trouble ticket, they can find out what they're coming up against before they even respond to the call," Gonzales says. "It enables them to be much more proactive."

The reporting power in LANDesk Management Suite enables the university IT team to be proactive in other ways as well, as Gonzales explains, "If a problem or version conflict arises with a certain piece of software or OS, we can run a query in LANDesk to find out which machines will likely be affected, and then proactively fix the problems before they ever affect the users."

Business Needs

- Support 5,300 workstations and 1,200 users spread across a 735-acre campus and other geographically dispersed locations.
- Improve overall workstation lifecycle management.
- Simplify budget planning processes.
- Unify support efforts for PC and Macintosh workstations.

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite

Business Benefits

- Increased support-staff productivity by 400% resulting in faster problem resolution and more satisfied internal customers.
- Cut asset management and budget planning reporting time from weeks to minutes.
- Empowered department heads and other non-technical staff members to get the budget information they need, whenever they need it.
- Unified support efforts for both PCs and Macintosh clients.
- Maximized IT budget dollars through accurate forecasting based on actual needs.

Dynamic, Detailed and Accurate

The influence of LANDesk® Management Suite inventory reporting extends well beyond the help desk at Baylor University. It plays a pivotal role in the school's IT asset management and budgeting processes as well. "LANDesk Management Suite allows us to easily see and divide up our computer lifecycle for the entire campus," says Vicky Gerik, director of client services at Baylor University. "We can quickly produce accurate numbers for projecting each year what we need allotted for technology procurement. When we meet with our CIO to determine hardware replacement levels, I can give him a detailed and accurate breakdown of actual needs and numbers. To get that detail of information in the past would have taken weeks. LANDesk gives it to us in minutes."

Realizing the power inherent to inventory management and reporting in LANDesk Management Suite, Baylor decided to extend that capability to department heads and other non-technical staff members with budgetary responsibilities. By leveraging the custom fields and query features in LANDesk Management Suite, Gonzales created a Web portal that allows certain individuals in different departments to view IT asset information specific to their department and responsibility. The Web-based report not only shows budget managers how many and what kind of PCs they have, but how old each PC is and how far it is along Baylor's prescribed hardware replacement schedule.

"Now they can see their entire departmental inventory on one page," Gonzales says. "They don't have to come to me anymore every time that they need to run a new report. It frees me up to focus on other things, while empowering the different departments to get the information they need for budgeting and planning whenever they need it, year-round."

"Budgeting is one of the biggest issues that a university IT department faces," adds Gerik. "You only have a limited supply of money, so you need to be able to maximize what you have. LANDesk Management Suite has enabled us to do that, giving us an accurate grasp on what our technical needs are now and going into the future. It has allowed us to create a computer lifecycle with projected guidelines for hardware replacement broken down by category. Instead of over-projecting or under-projecting, we're able to hit closer to the mark, resulting in significant savings and better preparation for the future."

Unified Service Infrastructure

While the IT infrastructure of Baylor University is primarily comprised of Windows workstations, the school also has more than 500 Macs as well. The heterogeneous platform support in LANDesk® Management Suite has had a unifying affect on the school's IT services, providing the same positive impact on customer service, problem resolution, asset management and budget planning for the Macintosh community.

"From a support capability standpoint, for us there is no difference between a Mac and a PC," Gonzales says. "We can remote control a Mac or a PC from the same console. We can run budget reports, asset reports, or software reports on both of them at the same time. We can use LANDesk for everything across the board."

"From its remote control to budget planning and asset management capabilities, LANDesk Management Suite has become a critical part of our service infrastructure," Gerik says. "LANDesk has become a valuable necessity at Baylor University."



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Director of ITS - Client Services
Baylor University