PremierWest Bank Reduces the Installation Time of Core Banking Application by 80% Using Prism Deploy

PremierWest Bank has enjoyed success because they put people first. Committed to being the best community bank throughout Oregon and Northern California, it's the people of PremierWest who have made it excel. A can-do attitude, a friendly smile and a willingness to go the extra mile extends from the tellers all the way to the less public face of the Information Technology (IT) department. It is this IT team that is crucial to the growth goal at PremierWest.

With five technicians, the IT department is poised to handle the challenges of a growing bank. This means that key players like Cameron Frasnelly, Network Manager for PremierWest, are looking for tools to automate and streamline the IT function. If they can automate the process of deploying key applications, as well as the process of building and rebuilding machines with the right software, key technicians will have significantly more time to spend on strategic tasks. According to Cameron, "We're not considering just any tools. We can't afford to sacrifice an ounce of service to customers or employees." A crucial tool to this end is Prism Deploy® by New Boundary Technologies™. According to Cameron, "Prism Deploy is allowing us to change the scope of our business while actually increasing our quality of service."

The IT department at PremierWest currently manages 400 Microsoft® Windows desktops and laptops spread across 33 sites in the U.S that are connected via various links. Laptop users are loosely connected. A variety of user levels make keeping the software up-to-date, and user environments protected, a virtual nightmare. Cameron and his team achieved this using a combination of "sneaker net" and remote control. "I know it's old-fashioned, but with our environment and the intricacy of our banking applications, to place a technician at a computer used to be the only sure fire way to make sure things get done," said Cameron.

"We just can't risk something not working the way it's supposed to," he said.

Cameron estimated that installing and configuring the core banking application used by every employee would take about one hour and 15 minutes per computer. The total time for this task equates to 500 hours, or 12 weeks of a technician's time. The total time does not include the time of the 400 end users who sit unproductive while their computers are being updated. Due to the core banking application stacked with communications software, "We didn't think there was a way to automate it," according to Cameron.

The consistent growth of PremierWest has resulted in additional computers and users for the IT department to service while maintaining IT head count at present levels. Additionally, Cameron and the IT staff at PremierWest are responsible for managing several branch office sites. How could a team of five accomplish twice the amount of work given the same amount of time? Cameron realized he was going to have to get creative. He then remembered Prism Deploy, a software packaging and deployment solution he had used in a previous IT position with another bank. He downloaded Prism Deploy and assigned the evaluation to Travis Rogers, another technician at PremierWest. Just one week later, Prism Deploy had been fully evaluated and requisitioned for purchase.

"There was no doubt in my mind," said Cameron. "Getting the core banking application installation time down from one hour and 15 minutes per computer to under fifteen minutes per computer meant Prism Deploy would pay for itself a couple of times over during the first rollout!" he said.

Because PremierWest is spread across so many sites, three "hub" sites are utilized. Computers at remote sites get their software packages from the hub site closest to them. "Prism Deploy allowed us to tailor packages for each site," describes Cameron. "Since changes that are made to the package for each site are handled centrally

by Travis, there's no additional maintenance needed at the hub sites. Once the package is moved to a hub site, it's just drag and drop from there," he said.

When asked if he had considered other tools, Cameron replied, "We looked at other tools but were happiest with Prism Deploy." He continued, "When we find a tool that we can evaluate in one day while being assured that we will get a live person on the phone to walk us through any questions we might have - even looking at and debugging the packages we've created- and then get the whole system implemented in under two days, you just don't find that quality of software and service every day. The reliability of the packages at installation points meant there would be no sacrifice in quality to our employees and/or customers. That was the real deal maker," he said.

When Travis Rogers needed some ideas for staging a deployment to multiple sites, he contacted the New Boundary Technologies support team. "They wrote a tech note just for me!" exclaimed Travis. "The New Boundary support technician made it simple for me to set up a multi-site deployment from our central office." Of the support team at New Boundary Technologies, Travis raves, "The product service and support is over the top. They really go the extra mile to ensure things are working for us."

Prism Deploy is changing how PremierWest does business. "Prism Deploy frees up knowledge in our department," said Cameron. "Instead of asking a

technician to drive or fly around to various sites to perform tedious tasks, Travis spends time building and testing deployment packages," he continued. "Once Travis is comfortable that things are working properly, anyone can use the simple, intuitive Prism Deploy console to assign tasks to computers. The skill level required for Prism Deploy is so low. We now need only one or two experts to build packages, and the rest of the process can be handled by any one of our employees!" said Cameron.

"For example," Cameron explained, "we have posted Prism deployment packages on a secure Web page. When an employee at a remote site needs an application or for their system to be rebuilt, they are instructed to simply visit links on the Web page to update their software." Previously this task meant taking control of the computer or sending a technician out to the employee's site. According to Cameron, "this is just the start." He added, "The Prism Deploy software is so reliable, I'm sure we'll soon count on it for deploying all of our software."

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T E C H N O L O G I E S ®

New Boundary Technologies®
1300 Godward Street NE, Suite 3100
Minneapolis, MN 55413
Tel. 612.379.3805 / Toll-free 800.747.4487
Fax 612.378.3818
www.newboundary.com
info@newboundary.com