Case Study

Organization:
Landratsamt
Sigmaringen

Landkreis Sigmaringen

Industry:
Government

New Boundary Technologies' Prism Deploy Brings Automation and Efficiency to Sigmaringen District's Expanded Responsibilities

Profile: Landratsamt Sigmaringen (Sigmaringen District) is a government entity located in the Danube River area of southern Germany. Sigmaringen District performs and oversees services for the area's 25 townships and 20,000 residents. Major industries in the district include agriculture, forestry, engineering, metal production and textiles. The Sigmaringen District is also a destination for travelers because of its many historic towns and castles, and beautiful recreational areas.

Situation: Sigmaringen District's IT department took on added responsibility for several new departments as a result of a nationally mandated administrative reform in 2005. After the reform, Sigmaringen District found that its previous solution for installing and updating software on the district's 600 PCs was no longer up to the task of managing 200+ applications at ten different sites.

Solution: Working with system consultant OPTIMAL® System-Beratung GmbH, Sigmaringen District chose Prism Deploy® by New Boundary Technologies® to streamline, automate and centralize deployment of the district's standard applications, as well as specialized applications needed by each department. Prism Deploy was selected because of its clear and user-friendly interface, and its SmartUpdate™ technology, which enables laser-focused software deployments. In addition, Prism Deploy's ability to install software outside of normal working hours means that the important work of district employees is not interrupted.

Describing New Boundary Technologies' Prism Deploy:
Complete Solution, Flexible, Efficient

Out of Control

In 2005, the German government mandated an administrative reform that affected all governmental entities throughout Germany. Some of the goals of the reform were to improve Germany's business climate, help foster innovation and remove duplicative government services. As part of the reform, Sigmaringen District was given added responsibility for providing software deployment and other IT services to several departments that previously managed their own IT. Some of the departments added to Sigmaringen District included forestry management, department of motor vehicles, youth and family services, waste management, land surveying and several others.

Sigmaringen District had been getting by with a proprietary software deployment solution that they combined with 'sneaker-net' administration. Applications would often be manually installed or updated on individual PCs, one at a time. "When the administrative

Case Study

Organization:
Landratsamt
Sigmaringen

Landkreis Sigmaringen

Industry:
Government

reforms of 2005 were implemented, many more departments were added to Sigmaringen District, and therefore a lot of new business applications needed to be distributed and maintained," said Wolfgang Schmidt, IT administrator of the district. "The old solution was not flexible enough and could not meet the demands of our new responsibilities."

Experiencing Control

Sigmaringen District worked with OPTIMAL to find an up-to-date software deployment solution that would help the district fulfill its new and expanded responsibilities. Bert Rheinbach of OPTIMAL introduced New Boundary Technologies' Prism Deploy solution to the district's IT administrators and advised them on how it could be used to address all of Sigmaringen's software deployment challenges. One key challenge included targeting and automating deployments and configuration settings to PCs located at ten different sites. Another challenge was retaining support for many legacy scripts that Sigmaringen had created for their previous deployment solution. Finally, the solution needed to be able to schedule deployments outside of normal working hours.

Prism Deploy addressed several of Sigmaringen District's application deployment needs:

- **Laser-sharp targeting of software deployments to appropriate departments.** Since Sigmaringen already makes extensive use of Global and Domain Local Security groups in their Active Directory structure, OPTIMAL showed them how to bring security group membership into the Prism Console using SmartUpdate "Member_Of" rulesets.

- **Group managed PCs by IP address in order to configure appropriate proxy server and other settings.** OPTIMAL explained how Sigmaringen could use IP address rulesets to create an alternate set of groups for this purpose. (Computers can be members of any number of configuration groups.)

- **Manage VB scripts and batch files created by a previous proprietary deployment system.** Sigmaringen District wanted to continue to use those scripts for legacy software installations. OPTIMAL showed how Command Tasks are used to run Windows Installer files (.msi), setup files (.exe) and batch (.bat) files. Command Tasks support all optional switches and other command-line properties, making it unnecessary to repackage legacy software for distribution with Prism Deploy.

- **Utilize Prism Deploy Packages (.pwc) to deploy anything from complete applications to minor configuration changes.** Configuration changes handled by Prism Packages include registry tweaks, printer installations, removals of unapproved software, application configuration settings and countless other settings. Prism Deploy Packages are created using snapshot technology. They contain numerous built-in and customizable variables to support deployment to a wide variety of operating system and user environments.

- **Ensure software deployments do not interrupt the important work of district employees.** Prism Deploy's extensive scheduling options allow deployments to happen exactly when and how Sigmaringen desires. For example, deployments can either run immediately or later at a scheduled time. Deployments can be triggered by certain events, such as a user logging in or restarting the PC. In addition, deployments can be configured to wake the target computers (Wake on LAN) in order to start the deployment.

Case Study

Organization:

Landratsamt
Sigmaringen

Landkreis Sigmaringen

Industry:

Government

New Boundary Technologies

10 Second Street N.E.
Suite 107
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612.379.3805 or 800.747.4487
info@newboundary.com
www.newboundary.com

Benefits of Control

After purchasing Prism Deploy, Sigmaringen District made the transition to it in small increments until their old solution was phased out. They found that the Prism Deploy application server, SQL database and client components were easily installed. "We wanted a lean, easy to install solution that used only a database and an application server," Schmidt said. "Prism Deploy met all of our requirements, and seemed simple and easy to use right away."

Sigmaringen District is now reaping the benefits of switching to Prism Deploy. For example, the Prism Deploy Package Editor turned out to be a surprising key feature for the IT Department. "The functionality of the Package Editor impressed us," said Schmidt. IT staffers use it to create and deploy packages to install everything from Citrix INI file settings to drivers for barcode scanners to data catalogs of groundwater information. In addition, the Conflict Checker utility that is part of Prism Deploy Package Editor helps the IT staff diagnose and fix DLL or registry conflicts before they reach a single computer.

The district makes extensive use of dynamic SmartUpdate configuration groups. For example, they create groups for each of the functional areas within the ten sites. If they need to deploy an updated groundwater data catalog or an application update to the Environmental Department in a certain

> "The flexibility we needed for software distribution was critical, and that's why we selected Prism Deploy. It doesn't matter if the software is packaged, scripted or natively installed. Everything is possible with this solution."
>
> Wolfgang Schmidt
> IT Administrator of the district

region, they can be confident that the configuration group contains all the relevant PCs for that deployment. Likewise, they can target PCs where users with certain functions (such as finance or motor vehicle licensing) will receive updates. SmartUpdate technology means Sigmaringen District always has up-to-date information about the configuration of their PCs. Schmidt says, "The ability to create configuration groups means we can automate much more than was previously possible."

Sigmaringen District also appreciates the simplicity and flexibility of Prism Deploy. "A software rollout should not take days or weeks," said Schmidt. Prism Deploy's processes were intuitive and easy to learn, and deployments in Sigmaringen District's complex environment are now done in a few minutes. According to Schmidt, "The flexibility we needed for software distribution was critical, and that's why we selected Prism Deploy. It doesn't matter if the software is packaged, scripted or natively installed. Everything is possible with this solution." The quality of technical support is also crucial. "Consulting and maintenance through OPTIMAL is exemplary. Support requests are answered competently and problems are solved quickly," explains Schmidt.