

ACRONIS SNAP DEPLOY CLICKS INTO PLACE AT KONICA MINOLTA'S TRAINING ACADEMY



KONICA MINOLTA

Time to reformat PCs cut by 50 per cent

Introduction

With its headquarters in Basildon, Essex, Konica Minolta Business Solutions is one of the UK's leading document solutions companies, providing cutting-edge digital multi-functional and printing appliances including photocopiers, printers, fax machines. It has a network of direct sales and service centres across the country and over 130 independent full-service dealerships.

Over the last decade, the way in which customers have used Konica Minolta's products has changed dramatically. In the past, photocopiers, printers and fax machines all operated as separate, and often stand-alone, machines. Today, however, many of these functions have been combined to provide single machines capable of faxing, photocopying and printing. In addition, these integrated products now form an integral part of an office's communications network.

"These changes have led to what we refer to as an increase in digitisation, networking and connectivity across our entire product range," explains Paul Johnston, Technical Systems and Solutions Trainer, at Konica Minolta. "The traditional service scenario for analogue printers, photocopiers and faxes was characterised by a limited number of known factors, predictable error potential and the maximum risk of one irreparable machine. Nowadays, when machines are integrated into the IT infrastructure, the service scenario is much more complex and there are an unlimited number of unknown factors including unpredictable error potential and, in the worst case, the possibility of a complete network failure. It was therefore essential that we made technical training a top priority for all our sales and service representatives."

Hi Tech, High Expectations

In order to ensure all its direct sales force and dealer partners remain completely up to speed on the latest networking and digital technology, Konica Minolta invested in a new training academy in Milton Keynes, where groups of up to 20 delegates learn how to install, integrate and maintain the company's products, thereby ensuring end-users continue to receive a high standard of customer service and post-sales support.

The intensive three-day courses run back-to-back throughout most of the year, giving very little time between sessions to remove work from the PCs in the training labs and re-install a specifically-designed set of files and applications for the next set of attendees. When the academy first opened, this task took more than four hours, which meant that having to come in early in the morning or stay late in the evening in order to have the systems set up in time for the next course.

Company:

- Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd

Industry:

- Manufacture, supply and maintenance of photocopiers, printers, fax machines and related products

Key Challenge:

- Decrease time taken for the company to reset PCs once delegates have completed their courses in order to allow back-to-back training sessions to run within normal office hours

Environment:

- 20 PCs running on Microsoft Windows

Solution:

- 20 Acronis Snap Deploy 2.0 licenses

Business Benefit:

- Time taken to reformat PCs with master files, applications and system settings cut by 50 per cent
- Improved departmental efficiency

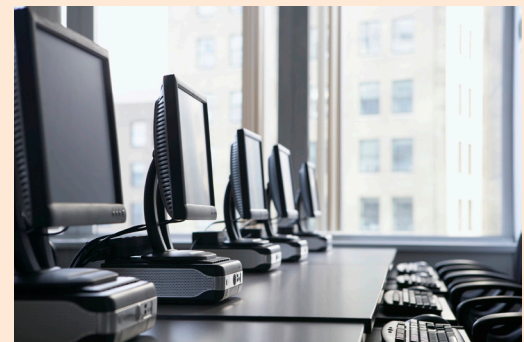


Image is everything

Paul Johnston decided to look at ways to reduce this re-installation headache and, after examining a number of approaches, discovered that disk imaging might be the best way forward. Disk imaging would create a single master image of all the files, system settings and applications that could be installed by CD onto each PC in a fraction of the time. Although the theory was sound problems were encountered when testing several pieces of disk imaging software.

As Paul Johnston notes, none of the solutions that were initially tested delivered the levels of stability or reliability required. "This was the case with several well-known brands including Symantec's Ghost product," recalls Johnston, "and it was with a great deal of frustration that we returned to our original method of a manual system restore and the apparently never-ending prospect of early mornings or late nights."

At that point, it was suggested that the company tested Acronis Snap Deploy, a comprehensive deployment solution that enables IT organizations deploy or restore laptops and desktops quickly and easily. Snap Deploy creates an exact disk image of the standard configuration, including the operating system and all applications. It can also deploy that image to multiple systems simultaneously, making it ideal for rapid bare-metal installations.

"I remember thinking I'd give disk imaging one more shot and if this software didn't work, I'd have to look for a different way to solve our problem," comments Paul Johnston.

Fortunately, after familiarizing himself with the Acronis Snap Deploy software, Johnston was able to create a master image that could be used to quickly and easily reformat each of the 20 PCs in the training labs. With Acronis Snap Deploy, the time required to complete this task was cut in half while the images were 100 per cent accurate.

Conclusion

Paul Johnston has been extremely impressed by Acronis Snap Deploy, and has been able to remain much more focused on his core job of providing trainees with the best learning environment possible. "This," as Paul Johnston notes, "means that instead of worrying about when we're going to find time to carry out the system resets, we can concentrate completely on ensuring our attendees know how to deliver first class installation and post-sales support."

About Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd

Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd markets business machines manufactured by Konica Minolta Business Technologies Inc, in the United Kingdom through a direct sales force and a network of independent dealerships. Konica Minolta digital imaging systems are manufactured in Japan and China. All are ISO9002 accredited for quality procedures.

UK turnover for Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd is in excess of £120 million, placing the company fifth in the digital copier market with a 8.6 per cent share of the black and white market and a market leading 34.9 per cent share of the colour market (not including colour capable systems) according to Infosource.

With a total workforce of 19,800 employees world wide, Konica Minolta Business Technologies generated net sales of over £3.15 billion in fiscal 2005/2006. Globally Konica Minolta Holdings, Inc. has a turnover £6.1 billion. Building on its strong core of optical technologies developed over many years, Konica Minolta Business Technologies aims to be a corporation offering products and services that are essential to all areas of digital imaging.

About Acronis®

Acronis is a world leader in providing advanced, scalable storage management and disaster recovery software that helps enterprises safeguard their information and assures the availability, security, integrity and recoverability of their infrastructure. Acronis' patented disk imaging and disk management technology has won broad industry acclaim and numerous awards for excellence in data protection, backup and recovery, system deployment, and server migration for both physical and virtual machine servers.



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