Financial Services

Locking down laptops, not users

Snapshot:

Company:
– Global financial services firm

Year of MokaFive adoption:
– 2009

Challenges:
– Traveling executives complained about carrying two laptops
– Top-level executives wanted to use Macs
– Most solutions didn't meet strict security and remote management policies
– Software updates disrupted end users

Results:
– Traveling executives can carry one laptop (either a Mac or PC) for both work and personal use
– BYOC program leads to significant cost savings during PC refresh cycles
– Traveling executives can use preferred Macs for work
– Background software updates are transparent to end users

Mobile executives grow tired of lugging around two laptops.

The Problem: Security requirements bring extra baggage.

Some 1,500 globe-trotting executives at a giant financial services firm had to carry two laptops whenever they traveled because of security policies. One laptop was strictly for work, the other for personal use.

Many of the high-level executives favored Apple Macs, yet the IT department would not support them.

Tired of lugging around two laptops, mobile executives complained loudly and even offered a compromise: they were willing to buy a laptop, preferably a Mac, under a bring-your-own-computer (BYOC) program if it could somehow be used for both personal and work computing.

Looking for options, the IT department considered virtualization, as it provides an important separation between personal and corporate environments. However, they worried that security and control management policies couldn't be enforced in a virtual desktop environment. "Our policies are pretty tight," says an IT manager at the firm. "The devices we provide are pretty locked down with encryption and layers of authentication to prevent data leakage. For instance, we don't allow personal email on work-issued laptops."

IT began researching solutions to accommodate the needs of their mobile executives.

The Solution: Centralized management—local execution.

The IT department looked into various desktop virtualization models only to come away dissatisfied. With Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), for instance, client apps are hosted on servers and require users to have Internet access in order to get any work done.

Meanwhile, running virtualized apps on an unprotected computer proved to be unsecure. None of the VDI offerings had the level of security that the IT department required. They discovered an alternative solution to VDI—MokaFive Suite, an end-to-end desktop management solution for the enterprise that leverages the best of both centralized and distributed worlds.

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For instance, MokaFive Suite prevents users from cutting and pasting data from one virtual session to another. Other vendors' solutions don't offer such controls, increasing the risk of data leakage. This is just one of many security features in the MokaFive Suite.

MokaFive Suite also brings critical management features, such as remote kill for lost or stolen PCs and automatic background updates. More importantly, MokaFive Suite provides full encryption of customer data in compliance with security regulations.

"In the past, when users connected to the virtual private network, their PCs would start downloading updates. Users would have to wait for the updates to finish before they could start working," says the IT manager. "We didn't have these features before."

The Rewards: One Mac for happy travelers.

The financial services firm began deploying MokaFive Suite last year and quickly gained new remote management features while continuing to meet tough security requirements.

"We improved the update and management piece for the end user and for us, and partially got out of the business of corporate laptops with the BYOC program while still maintaining all the controls on the physical side," says the IT manager.

The BYOC program currently has many mobile executives who now carry a single laptop instead of two. Some 1,500 executives are expected to enroll in the program in the near future. For the first time, many will be able to use a Mac for work.

With so many people expected to buy their own laptops, the company should reap considerable savings during every PC refresh cycle. "We usually refresh up to 20 percent of our PC fleet in a cycle," says the IT manager. "BYOC might cut that by half."

The biggest benefit comes in the form of happy, Mac-loving mobile executives.

"It's a lot easier getting through a trip," says an executive in the BYOC program who used to carry two laptops wherever he went. Now he brings a single Macbook for work as well as personal use, such as communicating with his family via Skype while on the road.