

The Situation

Himmerlands Elforsyning A.m.b.a. (HEF) is a regional Danish utilities company which consists of four divisions: HEF Net, HEF EnergiTeknik, Energi Nord and HEF Bredbånd. With headquarters located in the Danish city of Aalborg, the organization provides electricity to over 80,000 customers throughout a region covering 2,500 square kilometers of northern Denmark. In addition, HEF provides broadband Internet connections and a range of installation and maintenance services.

The Challenge

HEF is a fast-growing company whose workforce has doubled over the past four years. Its rapid growth has led to the expansion of the company's IT infrastructure which, as a consequence, has become increasingly complex to administer.

"Our production environment consists of 170 servers running Windows Server 2003, Linux in two datacenters and 350 desktops and laptops running Windows XP. We used to manage this environment with a lot of business-critical applications that had a selection of tools and management consoles such as Microsoft System Center, Microsoft App-V and Citrix XenApp, and we would rely heavily on homemade scripts and MSI files," said Søren Sejr Petersen, CIO at HEF. "The rapidly expanding IT environment put stress on the IT department. The numerous different tools and scripts started to look like a complicated puzzle and simply adding IT staff was not going to be the solution. We needed another way of finding time and getting more work done with the existing IT staff."

HEF started looking for a solution to simplify the difficult workflow and physical

tasks involved in supplying its employees with new PCs and applications. It was essential to simplify the processes as much as possible whilst enabling them to integrate with the existing Microsoft and Citrix technologies in addition to providing a single point of management.

The Solution

About two years ago, HEF got in contact with ITX which presented them with an integrated framework for managing and rolling out workstations. The framework used ITX's experience and their system imaging technology combined with RES Workspace Manager and RES Automation Manager. After a proof of concept in a test environment lasting several weeks, HEF was convinced that the software would be able to meet the company's requirements and decided to implement the RES Software solution. ITX designed the initial environment and helped roll out the first PCs.

"We found RES Software products remarkably easy to learn to use and administer," continued Petersen. "Looking over the ITX engineers' shoulders was all we needed to learn what we needed to know, so there was no need for us to take any courses. This was a very compelling reason for us to select RES Software products."

Now, most of the 350 Windows XP systems are controlled by RES Workspace Manager and RES Automation Manager and run local as well as Citrix-based applications. In addition, about 50 of the Windows Server 2003 systems, including 30 servers with Citrix XenApp, are managed using the RES Software solution.

The Benefits

There used to be many ways for HEF system administrators to reach their objectives. Now, thanks to RES Software solutions,



the company saves a huge amount of time because RES Workspace Manager and RES Automation Manager hide IT complexity. A single management console is used for all administrative tasks and integrates with Citrix XenApp application publishing and Microsoft App-V.

"We don't need to be thoroughly trained in or specialize in each separate IT technology as more people are able to support the infrastructure troubleshooting and handling problems themselves. IT tasks are now easily transferable, so a basic understanding of the software is enough for the staff to be productive," added Petersen.

"RES Software also has a short return on investment. It enables the IT staff to be much more productive and saves users time. We are able to operate more effectively and intelligently without having to work any harder, and we have a better grip on and more control over IT."

HEF uses RES Automation Manager to support the rollout process of PCs and applications and finds that the installation of applications using RES Automation Manager gives them much tighter control than Microsoft System Center. RES Automation Manager also integrates with RES Workspace Manager, adding another layer of control in automating settings such as internet connections, shortcuts and favorites. The company can skip many manual processes to make rolling out new PCs significantly easier and its IT staff is now much more responsive when it comes to solving problems that users may have within their work environment, especially when rolling out new applications. HEF especially likes the logging features that show exactly what went wrong and under what circumstances.

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RES Workspace Manager and RES Automation Manager enable full functionality in a unified management console. As all processes are automated, there is no longer need for manual

settings or the use of logon scripts. It is no longer necessary to have a scripting languages expert and knowledge-sharing is straightforward.

“We supply our internal billing system, called SonWin, to two other companies. This billing system includes a facility for sending an e-mail message that includes a copy of the invoice and requires Microsoft Outlook to be configured on the

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terminal servers. Previously, we would need to create an Outlook profile, logging in as the user to set it up and then using scripts to configure the environment. Now, the user simply starts SonWin from the RES

Workspace Manager user workspace and the rest is handled automatically.”

The company uses about 30 XenApp servers in silos to separate applications. One consequence of siloing is that Citrix servers in different silos are not identical. RES Workspace Manager enables them to stop using roaming profiles and handles profiles and settings much more smoothly and efficiently.

HEF uses laptops instead of desktops for most of its employees. The company-supplied laptops are also used to work remotely and from home locations. Many office LAN settings, such as the proxy settings and the default printer, need to be different in the home environment.

“We use RES Workspace Manager to provide the correct local settings automatically, according the IP address. Previously, users were faced with a different set of access application icons when they were at home than those on the office LAN. Now everything is arranged logically, so it is much easier for employees to locate and start applications,” concluded Petersen.

About RES Software

RES Software, the proven leader in dynamic desktop solutions, is driving a transformation in the way organizations manage, maintain and reduce the cost of their desktop infrastructure. The RES Software award-winning, patented products enable IT professionals to manage and deliver secure, personalized and compliant desktops independent of the underlying computing infrastructure – thin clients, virtual desktops, physical desktops, or server-based computing environments. The company empowers customers, from small to medium-sized businesses to global enterprises, to reduce desktop complexity and meet the essential needs of a dynamic workforce that requires on-demand access to their personalized workspaces. For more information, follow updates on [Twitter@RESSoftware](#) and visit www.ressoftware.com.