

Case Study



HDR was serious about finding the best solution to automate and standardize deployment across their 85-site corporation. Some offices had no deployment automation, while others were automating deployments the best way they knew how. In an extensive three-phase decision process, New Boundary Technologies® Prism Deploy® shined as the best option to support HDR's specific needs.

Background:

Established in 1917, HDR is a nationally recognized architectural, engineering, planning and consulting firm. HDR's commitment to client excellence and achieving high levels of professional expertise has earned the company much success since its founding. HDR recently ranked 23 on the 2003 Engineering News Record "Top 500 Design Firms" list.

Originally founded as a civil engineering firm providing transportation, water and power services, HDR's services have evolved to include architecture, environmental and resource management, and design-build. HDR services encompass the entire life cycle of a project, from planning and pre-design through construction management and inspection, and keeping the built infrastructure secure. HDR is playing a role in restoring or improving key national landmarks including the Hoover Dam Bypass, the Pentagon, and the fragile wetlands of the Everglades.

Network Environment:

HDR's strategic efforts rest in the hands of their 3,200 employees who conduct business in more than 85 offices worldwide. Their computer network is almost equal in number with 3,200 PC's. Initially, HDR's computers are level-set with a Norton Ghost™ "base image," which includes the operating system and core applications. From there, HDR's System Service Representatives (SSRs) further customize the computer to fit the specific needs of the individual user.

Some of HDR's software is custom written by a team of in-house developers. After final testing the application is turned over to the SSR for deployment.

Organization:

HDR, Inc.

Company Profile:

HDR is an architectural, engineering, planning and consulting firm that excels at complex projects and solving challenges for clients. More than 3,200 employee-owners, including architects, engineers, consultants, scientists, planners and construction managers, in over 85 locations worldwide, pool their strengths to provide solutions beyond the scope of traditional A/E/C firms.

Situation:

HDR operates with a network of 3,200 PCs. HDR Information Services at the Corporate offices in Omaha, Nebraska decided to standardize deployments, making it easier for System Service Representatives of varying technical skills to roll out software within each office.

Solution:

New Boundary Technologies Prism Deploy emerged as the only option for HDR after being tested during their extensive evaluation process. Prism allows people with varying technical skill sets to use Prism Deploy with ease, while providing maximum customer support. HDR found these features important as well as scalability, tracking method and MSI compatibility.

Challenge:

All 85 HDR offices are supported locally. As a result, each office was responsible for finding its own solution for installing software, making updates to the base image and getting users new applications as needed. For some offices, this meant using the old-fashioned "sneakernet" method of walking from computer to computer, which took place after hours or on weekends so as not to impact productivity. In the meantime, other offices were researching and implementing deployment solutions ad hoc.

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Evaluation:

The search for a standard deployment solution began with an eight-month evaluation process of 12 tools. To assure they chose the best option, HDR created a three-phase evaluation process, which began on paper. The paper evaluation (Phase One of the testing process) helped HDR narrow the search to four software packages that were powerful enough to deploy programs such as Microsoft Office or Windows hot fixes, yet scalable enough for the SSRs at each site to install and manage their individual products. To be considered for Phase Two testing, the software packages had to meet 28 requirements. Software deployment, scalability, tracking method and MSI compatibility were key requirements.

Phase Two involved testing the four packages chosen in Phase One. Each package was evaluated for speed and functionality, and given points based on its performance. Prism Deploy from New Boundary Technologies quickly shined as the prime deployment solution for HDR.

"Many software deployment systems require weeks of training and integration time, not to mention a dedicated staff to maintain the product. We were looking for a tool that could be used by an SSR with a variety of user levels. We don't have the staff to support a complex infrastructure required by many systems. Prism Deploy has minimal set up and required little to no training," said Kelsey Kaczmarek, Automated Deployment Project Manager.

Not only is Prism Deploy easy to use, but HDR also found how easy it is to access the New Boundary Technologies support staff to answer questions. "Technical support is important to us. My impression is that New Boundary Technologies is very customer-focused, professional and responsive," said Kelsey.

Phase Three gave HDR the opportunity to hone in on each package and rate its effectiveness on key features. Kelsey piloted Prism Deploy at two remote sites. She assigned the HDR testers five deployment tasks to measure for deployment successes and failures, both of the deployment itself and of the software once it was installed. Prism Deploy performed powerfully. Both testing locations were impressed with Prism Deploy's capabilities, making it easy for HDR to achieve a more promising deployment future.

Result:

HDR Automated Deployment Project Team realized that Prism Deploy was the only option for their specific needs and chose Prism Deploy as their standardized packaging and deployment tool.

Prism Deploy best fit HDR's specific needs because Prism can handle simple to complex applications. Also important to HDR was the way the Prism technology can be used by a range of technical skill sets. The range of skill levels within each office is as varied as the 85 offices themselves. Prism makes it easy for people with different skills to deploy software.

The Difference:

The SSRs are pleased with Prism Deploy because they can now send updates during the day rather than after hours and on weekends, without impacting productivity. HDR estimated an immense savings in time for implementing software after the deployment of Prism Deploy. The time it took HDR to deploy our service pack using Prism Deploy was approximately eight minutes compared to 44 minutes when deployments were conducted manually. Using a figure of \$15.00/hour for labor costs deploying the Windows SP3 for all 3,200 workstations HDR would have saved approximately \$28,800.

"Because HDR requires two or three significant deployments per year, the Prism Deploy software would pay for itself in realized time saved," said Kelsey.



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