

Case Study

Organization:

Brookdale
Senior Living®



Industry:

Healthcare and
Housing Services
for Retired
Seniors

Leading U.S. Senior Living Company Relies on Prism Suite® to Centrally Manage Laptops and PCs at More Than 600 Community Sites

Profile: Brookdale Senior Living is the largest owner and operator of senior living communities throughout the United States. Brookdale operates 647 communities in 36 states, with the ability to serve approximately 67,000 residents while providing a full continuum of care.

Situation: The company needed tools to help them efficiently inventory and integrate newly acquired PCs onto Brookdale's core IT platform, minimizing downtime and manual procedures. The solution also had to be scalable so it could be used for ongoing configuration management and software updates on all Brookdale Senior Living PCs.

Solution: Brookdale uses modules of Prism Suite to meet aggressive transition deadlines when bringing PCs at a new community online: Prism Asset Manager® performs software and hardware inventory, and Prism Deploy® handles software rollouts and other configuration settings. These modules, plus Prism Patch Manager®, are used to carry out day- to-day IT functions for keeping the PCs updated and secure.

ROI: Prism Suite greatly reduces the amount of time needed to integrate new communities into Brookdale Senior Living's IT ecosystem. It eliminates tedious manual tasks involved in managing over 8,500 PCs, freeing IT staff to focus on more strategic projects.

Describing New Boundary Technologies' Prism Suite:

Flexible, Automatic, Efficient, Reliable

Gaining Control

Brookdale Senior Living encompasses multiple types of senior living communities with varying levels of care: independent living, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing. In addition, the company provides ancillary services, including several types of therapy (physical, speech, occupational), episode-driven home health services, rehabilitation and hospice services, plus much more.

When Brookdale became a Prism Suite customer in 2007, the company managed approximately 5,500 PCs at nearly 500 communities. By the end of 2012, Brookdale was managing more than 8,500 PCs at its communities across the nation. Naturally, such rapid growth presents challenges to Brookdale's IT organization, and Prism Suite helps them rise to the challenge.

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When acquiring a new community, Brookdale Senior Living pulls together an experienced, cross-functional team to plan and manage all aspects of the integration process. The technology portion of the new community's assessment includes planning for such things as wide area network access, configuring the email messaging platform and other system conversions to be compatible with existing Brookdale systems.

The Prism Suite client is deployed early in the process to gather hardware and software inventory data. This initial inventory helps the IT team determine which hardware needs to be updated and what changes need to be made to the software on the PCs.

"New Boundary Technologies offers us very flexible licensing packages for Prism Suite so that we can begin our assessment of new sites very early in the process," said Hank Reimer, Senior Director of IT End User Services. "This is key to meeting the fairly aggressive transition deadlines we set when making a new acquisition."

Experiencing Control

Brookdale's IT team learns a wealth of additional information about the managed PCs based on extensive use of

Prism Suite's Smart Update™ configuration groups. Smart Update automatically creates groups of PCs in the Prism Suite console that meet criteria defined by Brookdale's IT administrators. The criteria can be based on registry settings, WMI properties and numerous other variables.

For example, Brookdale uses Smart Update to automatically group PCs based on revisions of Java® or Internet

Explorer® installed. The automatic nature of Smart Update means that software updates can be assigned to those configuration groups, and computers that join the group weeks or even months later will receive their updates without needing any further intervention from the IT staff. "Given both the pace and the amount of growth we've experienced," said Reimer, "we simply can't rely on manual methods to inventory PCs, or learn which ones need software updates or tweaks to their settings. With Prism's configuration groups, a lot of those updates happen automatically."

Here are just a few of the types of software and configuration changes that Brookdale handles using Prism Suite tasks:

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Hank Reimer, Senior
Director of IT End User
Services for Brookdale
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- Software installations for various applications and platforms that Brookdale uses to manage its communities
- Adobe® product settings
- Internet Explorer settings

Benefits of Control

Brookdale Senior Living takes advantage of two features of Prism Suite to facilitate centralized management of their widely-dispersed population of PCs:

- 1) Configuration groups automatically sort all 8,500+ PCs into site-specific groups. That way, if a particular site needs a unique deployment or other configuration change, administrators can quickly deploy the change to just that group of PCs.
- 2) The Prism Suite client is configured to automatically use the Web Proxy service. This means laptops that frequently leave the corporate network will continue to securely communicate back to the Prism Suite server at Brookdale's headquarters, and thus remain under management.

The Prism Patch Manager component of Prism Suite is used to keep all systems up to date with operating system patches, service packs, and patches for 3rd party software. "We've begun to rely heavily on Prism Patch Manager to keep our

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Hank Reimer, Senior
Director of IT End
User Services for
Brookdale Senior
Living

Windows® systems patched," said Hank Reimer. "We appreciate the efficiency of being able to get both our Microsoft® and 3rd party patching all done in the same console in the same way."

Hank Reimer summed up this way: "As we've grown, we couldn't have accomplished half of what we did without using Prism Suite."

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