



Natural Alternatives
International, Inc.
Case Study

Industry

Health Care and Pharmaceuticals

Environment

Approximately 60 servers and 250 workstations. Windows and Microsoft Exchange.

Situation

With offices located around the world Natural Alternatives was looking for a way to manage its administrative systems remotely, reduce user downtime and provide lean, efficient IT services to the company.

Organization Profile

Natural Alternatives is a leading formulator and manufacturer of customized nutritional supplements that ships products to 28 countries worldwide.

Solution

The IT team was equipped with BlackBerry smartphones loaded with Mobile Admin and Mobile SSH.

Results

The Natural Alternatives IT department manages and monitors its international networks from a central location in California. The company has reduced downtime of key systems from hours to seconds, without having to increase IT resources.

Overview

Natural Alternatives International supplies products to a worldwide customer base from three locations: a California manufacturing headquarters, a Swiss facility, and a small sales location in Japan. In total, they run 60 servers, 250 workstations and numerous IP-enabled phones.

Their challenge? With an IT team based primarily in California, they needed a way to keep important systems up and running, without the need for increasing and distributing IT resources across all three locations.

They selected Mobile Admin—a proven tool for remote server administration. The out-of-the-box solution can seamlessly integrate with the BlackBerry Enterprise Server.

The results have been impressive for an IT team continually challenged to deliver more using less resources. Some of their advantages include:

- The ability to cost-effectively manage key administrative functions around the world from a central location
- An ability to reduce or eliminate systems downtime from hours to seconds because IT staff can fix problems on-the-run
- Eliminates the need to increase IT resources in other countries
- Offers access to managing the BAAN ERP system without having to use a VPN on a laptop

Managing an International User Base Already dedicated users of the BlackBerry Enterprise Solution for the executive team, Boyd realized that his IT team could also benefit from this powerful mobile technology. After testing several vendors who provided IT management applications for BlackBerry smartphones, he chose Mobile Admin.

“As far as functionality, design, and interface go, Rove’s solution came out the best,” he says. “I like the speed of Mobile Admin – with just a few key clicks I can administer just about everything from my BlackBerry smartphone.”

“Mobile Admin significantly reduces, if not eliminates, any downtime if we have server issues or Active Directory issues,” says Boyd. “With Mobile SSH, we are able to remotely Telnet/SSH to routers and switches and can find out what’s gone wrong, modify configurations and troubleshoot the problem.”

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Benefits

A significant advantage is the Active Directory Management capability, which allows Natural Alternatives to manage individual users. When completing complex tasks, like creating a purchase order, users can find themselves locked out of the application. Before Rove software was in place, this problem would trigger a call to the Help Desk, which would contact an IT administrator to unlock the application. If the IT person on duty was not at their desk, didn't have their laptop with them, or had to drive into the office from home, there were long delays – creating a work stoppage.

Now, when the Help Desk contacts IT administrators, they can unlock accounts from wherever they are using their wireless handheld device. This functionality was put to the test when a company director in Switzerland was locked out of an application at a critical point during business hours. While Boyd was in the dentist's chair thousands of miles away in California, he was able to use Mobile Admin on his BlackBerry smartphone to unlock the account in Switzerland and give the director his access again.

“When you have offices around the world, issues tend to come up when you're not prepared for them,” says Boyd. “The more tools and resources you have available, without burdening the environment, can make a huge difference to the bottom line.”