



"Thanks to the perfect connection, we are able to display the assets registered by Absolute Manage, together with hardware that is registered elsewhere, with no problems at all."

Manuel Miséré
IT Manager at Serviceplan

Absolute IT Control

Around 1,200 Mac computers and Windows PCs are in use at the Serviceplan Agency Group. Absolute Manage, the PC-lifecycle management solution ensures they are managed within a single interface.

Serviceplan supports companies in all aspects of communication including: advertising; media planning; events organisation and the development of management software for marketing departments. The group has 30 subsidiary companies, with branches in Germany, Zurich, Vienna, Paris and Dubai. This presents special challenges for the IT department: with approximately 1,200 computers and around 120 Blackberrys and iPhones, the agency required a solution that could offer easy administration of software and hardware at various locations. With 800 Windows PCs and 400 Macintosh systems, it was critical that the IT department would be able to manage both IT worlds with the same tool. Today, Absolute® Manage from Absolute® Software ensures convenient and efficient PC-lifecycle management.

A combination of Macs and Windows

Before the introduction of Absolute Manage, Serviceplan administered its Mac computers with the in-house Apple Remote Desktop solution and the Mac OS Server. True Image from Acronis was used for the management of the PCs. The main issue with this process was that the maintenance of the distributed system environments increased the administrative outlay, and therefore cost a great deal of time and money. A cross-platform product that allowed the management of both Macintosh and Windows operating systems at the same time was a top reorganisation priority for Manuel Miséré, the IT Manager at Serviceplan. Manuel said, "Only very few PC-lifecycle management solutions support both IT worlds – and only a few of these regard both sides as equal. On top of this, we needed a product that could handle the very different application areas of our computers", summarised the IT professional, whose team consists of ten employees. In addition to the classic Office workplaces, they also support graphical, lithographic, editing and video processing workplaces – with the corresponding, highly specialised applications for the respective application areas. "We needed a solution which enabled us to keep an eye on all these programs, and redistribute them when required," said Manuel. Not a simple task, because even the composition of the units used at Serviceplan turned out to be very individual. Depending on the application area, the employees receive mobile or stationary Mac or PC workplaces. They all had to be registered, serviced and secured.

Everything under a single roof

In the search for a suitable lifecycle management product, a large number of potential companies had already been eliminated as their solutions were only available for either Apple computers or Windows PCs. In addition to Absolute Manage, the software of a competitor was also shortlisted. However, in the end, only Absolute Manage was able to completely meet all the requirements of the IT department. "With this solution, we could simply read out the production and guarantee data of the Macs. In addition, there were clear and simple user interfaces that enormously reduced the familiarisation time for our employees," commented Manuel. The price-performance ratio was another important criteria in the decision-making process for Serviceplan.

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In January 2009, the deployment of Absolute Manage began, which was still under the name of LANrev at the time. "The rollout of the solution took place quickly and without any problems," recalls the IT Manager. "Within two weeks from the start of the installation, my team was fully familiarised and the software had been set up on both the Mac server and all the clients." Absolute Manage registered newly added units through the so-called Auto Deployment function, which automatically installed the agents onto computers that were not connected to the network during the original rollout phase, or that had been acquired afterwards.

Thanks to the automated processes, Manuel and his employees were able to considerably reduce the installation period for new software. For the IT Managers at Serviceplan however, the most important function of Absolute Manage is the simple and time-saving inventory of the hardware and software. Using the Asset Management tool, the administrators could check the IT inventory without any problems, and know at all times where each individual unit is located and when it has to be serviced or replaced. The IT department also uses the WebHelpDesk platform for the administration of around 120 company Blackberries and iPhones. A suitable interface ensures a direct link to Absolute Manage. "Thanks to the perfect connection created, we are able to display the assets registered by Absolute Manage together with hardware that is registered elsewhere with no problems at all," recounts a satisfied Manuel. Absolute Manage significantly facilitates the work of the IT department, and helps to provide a smooth-running support service for the employees.

The licence and security management is also essential for the IT department in view of the large number of applications in use. For example, the use of licences within the limitations of the contacts can be checked at any time by means of simply created reports. Manuel also regards the possibility of role-based administration as particularly useful. This tool allows the directors of individual Serviceplan companies to receive access to the Admin system on request, so they can track the usage of the individual software licences and their hardware inventory. With the help of the software blacklisting, the IT department can also detect illegal software on the computers, and can arrange to have it removed or blocked.

Manuel also sees results with regard to cost saving. This is ensured by IT Control, which is now comprehensive: the possibility of being able to check at any time which software is actually being used, where and how often helps to create a detailed cost-benefit analysis. There is also the simple User Interface; IT employees receive all the necessary information quickly and clearly. The personnel resources that are gained can be applied somewhere else.

Over and above this, Absolute Manage permits a practical link between IT security and energy management: after a pre-defined time, the solution activates cross-platform screen savers on every client computer, which can only be deactivated by entering a password. If a computer remains unused for a longer period the monitor sleep mode will be activated. This not only saves electricity, but also reduces the risk of unauthorised access and prolongs the life of LCD monitors. This is especially important when employees are not working in the office, but are on their laptop while travelling.

Absolute Manage consistently demonstrates its advantages even in situations that are normally very time consuming for IT staff. For example, a case in which, due to an error, there was no documentation regarding the computer into which a newly-ordered fixed disk had

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been installed. A glance at the invoice with the serial number, followed by a search using Absolute Manage provided the necessary clarity.

Manuel Miseré commented: "The solution surpasses our expectations. It is highly flexible, easy to operate and cost-effective. Absolute Manage pays off in particular for any company that works with heterogeneous IT environments." One point of particular importance to the IT Manager is the step from passive administration of the IT assets to an active, cost effective design of the IT resources. "Absolute Manage provides us with significant support."

About Absolute Manage

Absolute Manage is our lifecycle management and mobile device solution that allows IT administrators to manage PC, Mac®, Android, and iOS devices from within a single console. Customers can remotely engage with their deployment and perform standard maintenance routines as well as take strategic and responsive measures based upon the requirements of each device.

About Absolute Software

Absolute Software is the global leader in firmware-embedded persistent endpoint security and management solutions.

We provide organisations with comprehensive visibility and control over all of their endpoints – regardless of user or location. Our customers are able to optimise productivity, reduce operating costs, prove compliance, and remotely secure all of their devices and the corporate data they contain.

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