

VITAS Healthcare updates 5,000 endpoints remotely in two months



VITAS[®] Healthcare

Industry
Healthcare

Size
12,000 employees

Headquarters
Miami, FL

Revenue
\$1 Billion

Endpoints
5,000

Key Benefits

- Saved time and money through expanded remote software updates
- Streamlined IT troubleshooting with real-time endpoint visibility
- Reduced software patching cycle from 30 days to 2 weeks

The largest end-of-life care provider in the United States deployed Tanium to manage and secure devices that caregivers use at patient bedsides.

In 2019, time was running out for VITAS Healthcare. The company needed to upgrade its 5,000 laptops to Windows 10 before Microsoft ended support for Windows 7 in just a few months.

For VITAS, such operating system updates traditionally required manual installation by an IT technician. For 5,000 machines, that would have taken as long as a year to complete.

But Mitch Teichman, senior manager of client engineering at VITAS, knew there was a better way.

By deploying the Tanium Converged Endpoint Management (XEM) Platform, Teichman and his team were able to remotely update 98 percent of all employee computers in two months, something that was previously impossible with the company's other endpoint management tools.

"Tanium paid for itself in six months," Teichman says

Critical patches? Remote workforce? No problem.

Since then, Tanium continues to pay big dividends for VITAS Healthcare. With Tanium, Teichman's team has also reduced software patching cycles from more than 30 days to less than two weeks, leaving plenty of time for software quality checks.

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Mitch Teichman
Senior Manager of Client Engineering,
VITAS Healthcare

And most impressively, Tanium made the transition to supporting a distributed workforce during the pandemic remarkably easy. For example, just weeks after offices across the country shut down, Teichman's team needed to make a critical update to its electronic medical records (EMR) system.

With everyone working from home, company executives were concerned that this update would be difficult to carry out. But the process happened without a glitch.

“From all my experiences with Tanium, I knew this software update would be business as usual. And it was,” Teichman says.

Managing remote devices, without VPNs

With Tanium, VITAS Healthcare's patching process has been transformed. Previously, the company's IT department struggled to keep up with the mounting needs for better management and security of its endpoints. Issuing patches, for example, was a matter of “push and pray,” Teichman says.

“When you sent out a software patch, you just sat there hoping that it got to where it needed to go,” he says.

That's because the VITAS team had little to no visibility into the software patching and updating status for many of its endpoints. If a device wasn't connected to a VPN, the team couldn't see critical details for that computer.

But Tanium helped VITAS gain control of its endpoints through real-time visibility of its devices. Tanium can see and manage endpoints anywhere, and it doesn't require a VPN connection to do so.

Now with Tanium, the VITAS team patches software in a comfortable two-week cycle. They could go even faster, but this cadence allows the VITAS quality assurance team to test patches before releasing them to the endpoints.

A single source of truth for endpoints

VITAS Healthcare is continuing to find new ways to use Tanium to dramatically simplify and improve its endpoint software patching and updating process. For example, Tanium XEM's unified reporting is bringing a host of benefits to the company.

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These improvements, in turn, are helping VITAS respond rapidly to shifting regulatory demands and the need for frequent software updates.

In essence, Tanium XEM provides VITAS Healthcare with a single system of record for its devices, their software configurations, and their status.

The dashboard highlights all activities and issues, including endpoints undergoing updates, those that have successfully completed, and those that have failed to update, along with the reasons why.

“We now live in complete harmony when it comes to reporting with the security team,” Teichman says. “It's a beautiful thing. The numbers we see are the same numbers they see.”