

Darren Boyer knew there had to be a better way to provide managed services, but his current remote monitoring and management (RMM) tool wasn't meeting his needs.

His RMM tool, itControl Suite, was troubleshooting a function and it shut down his clients' computers in the middle of a workday. Once running, the computers unexpectedly shut down for a second time, then a third. All within an hour – at two of his clients' largest locations.

"That was the straw that broke the camel's back," said Boyer, president of pcit in Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada.

"After the first shut down, we called our provider, and they apologized. Then, it happened again, ten minutes later," he said. "I didn't like being in a position of having to explain why our vendor was testing things in our customers' production environment. They were carelessly dealing with our customers' live environments."

When he started looking at LabTech, he saw a better solution. LabTech is an agent-based tool, which is faster, more reliable and stable than a web-based tool like itControl Suite. To Boyer, using LabTech meant his RMM provider couldn't interfere with installations unless he approved it, which gave him a higher level of security.

Agent-based monitoring also requires less maintenance, results in lower network traffic and provides better monitoring than web-based or agentless systems.

Once deployed to target servers, the LabTech agents don't need direct maintenance since they can be upgraded automatically from the central management console. In addition, agent-based monitoring places less stress on your network and processing overheads than agentless monitoring since the agents only collect data locally and transport processed final results to the console.

The LabTech solution also provides deeper and broader monitoring and lets managed service providers (MSPs) develop scripts for repetitive functions.

pcit is an MSP that focuses on customers with ten to one hundred desktop users and serves a cross-section of small to medium-sized businesses in the Peace River Country of northwestern Alberta to northeastern British



Company:

pcit

Year founded: 2008

www.pcit.com

Challenge: pcit strived to optimize its customers' environments by pairing automation with remote maintenance and management to reduce service requests.

Solution: LabTech remote monitoring and management (RMM).

Results: pcit reduced its service requests by an estimated 63 percent and reduced its time to resolution by 20-30 percent.

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- DARREN BOYER, PCIT

Columbia, Canada. His customers include law and accounting firms, oil field construction companies and heavy duty truck dealerships.

His customers rely on pcit to protect and maintain their networks, servers, workstations and laptops in real time, and provide remote support, asset inventory management, virus protection and security.

LabTech Delivers Impressive Results

When Boyer started pcit three years ago, he felt strongly that managed services would be a better way to deliver technology to small and medium-sized businesses. And, he wanted to uphold his company's promise to deliver a more reliable system.

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"I wanted to optimize my customers' environments so we could reduce the number of service tickets per endpoint," Boyer explained. "I wanted to have their registry cleaned, their computer disks cleaned and their programs managed."

"To do this, we had to remotely run maintenance routines and maintain computers in an automated fashion," he continued. "LabTech is the best product on the market for an MSP to deliver proactive services. I haven't found anyone else in this region delivering anything close to what we're delivering. Now, we're an area industry leader."

pcit tells customers it can reduce service-related requests by up to 80 percent, a promise LabTech helps him fulfill. Since he started using LabTech, pcit is also responding more quickly to issues.

"We've had a huge reduction in time to resolution because of the technology LabTech offers," Boyer said. "The developers of LabTech spent a lot of time in the IT environment and know what's needed to efficiently deliver support. If we didn't have LabTech, we wouldn't be the industry leader in this region, and we wouldn't be able to deliver best-in-class results."

On average, his technical professionals respond to and resolve most issues in less than an hour. They respond to 100 percent of their tickets daily and resolve an average of nearly 80 percent of issues in the same day.

Run Maintenance Like Clockwork

Boyer likes that he could customize LabTech to fit his needs. For example, he developed scripts and functions that run maintenance routines on a regular schedule, in turn making his clients' systems more stable.

"As a managed service provider, we offer unlimited support, which means I tell customers to call us any time for anything," he said. "Under a managed service contract, it's better for business if they call less often."

Clients who don't receive proactive maintenance often request service 1 to 1 ½ times per end-user, per month. But when pcit is proactive and optimizes and standardizes its customers' environments, it can drive requests down to .2 to .4 per end-user, per month, Boyer explained.

“We can service the same environment and provide the same level of service but do 70 percent less work,” Boyer said.

Work in the Background, Without Interrupting End-Users

With LabTech, pcit’s technical professionals can edit a computer’s registry and make other fixes without interrupting the end-user. “We can log on remotely to solve their problems without them even knowing it,” Boyer said.

It’s a valuable service that satisfies even his most demanding clients. He once had a fussy customer who wanted all his printers to appear in the same order and by the same name on every computer in his office. “We did that remotely without impacting end-users,” Boyer said.

Informative Reports Provide Additional Value

LabTech can generate a variety of reports, ranging from the status of a customer’s network to detailed information about individual computers. For Boyer, that means he can create reports that help customers make important planning and budgeting decisions.

“LabTech reports let us help them make more informed decisions about when they should upgrade their hardware,” Boyer said. “Every quarter, we give them an overall snapshot of their technology and whether it aligns with their demands. If their hardware is overstressed, we include that in the report so they can make more informed decisions about when they should upgrade their hardware.”

LabTech generates reports that include specific details, such as a computer’s age, capacity and software versions. Reports even inform him if a hard drive is close to failure, allowing him to fix it before it crashes and loses important data.

Easy-to-Integrate, Easy-to-Use

Boyer likes that LabTech seamlessly integrates with his company’s software, such as Autotask business management software and Vipre antivirus. LabTech also integrates with ConnectWise, AVG, Doyenz Shadowcloud, Tigerpaw and a number of other essential third-party products.

In addition, LabTech has made pcit’s job even easier because it has such a low learning curve.

“A new employee recently commented how easy it is to use. He said, ‘At my former employer, we used to optimize our customer’s desktops manually over lunch hour and after work hours, and now we can do it automatically.’

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No More Pesky Bubbles

With LabTech's proactive tools, those annoying reminder bubbles virtually disappear.

"Our customers no longer get a bubble that says 'your Java is out of date,' or 'your Windows is out of date,'" Boyer said. "Without LabTech and App-Care, we would spend a lot of time and money managing those little bubbles. If we didn't manage them, customers would get confused, and the end-users would wonder if they should click or install, which makes them even more frustrated."

Keep Viruses Away

Although it's great when customers use antivirus software, it's often not enough. "We use LabTech as a tool to make sure our customers never get a virus," Boyer said. "Some customers have Vipre, but they don't have LabTech for automation, and they get four times the amount of viruses than environments that use LabTech."

During the last year, one of pcit's break-fix customers had about seven viruses removed in an office with 22 end-users. On the other hand, one of his customers that receives LabTech's proactive maintenance has never had a virus on its 45 computers.

Save Time and Gas with Remote Services

Even though pcit serves customers up to 550 kilometers (342 miles) away, distance isn't an issue since its technical professionals can remotely log into its customers' systems to resolve any issues.

"We have customers located more than 100 kilometers (62 miles) away, but we've never had to set foot in their offices for reactive issues," Boyer said. "We've always been able to resolve their problems remotely or work out a proactive schedule to prevent problems."

Do More with Fewer Employees

Because LabTech plays such an integral role in reducing pcit's time to resolution, it has a significant impact on the company's entire workday. In turn, pcit can take on more customers without changing staff levels.

"That's big. I've seen private companies with one IT staff member for every 25-60 computers. We expect our two-person staff to easily manage 400 computers."

LabTech Sets Stage for Future Growth

Since Boyer founded his business three years ago, he has doubled his revenue every year, and LabTech is helping him prepare for even more growth.

With LabTech, Boyer feels comfortable he can fulfill his main promise – to keep his customers' systems maintained and respond quickly to issues. The word is spreading, and he's getting referrals because of the high level of service he provides. His customers are recommending pcit to their colleagues, in turn helping his business grow even more.

pcit average response times since January 2011

- Time to response by qualified support technician: < 1 hour
- Time to resolution: < 1 hour
- Percentage of tickets resolved the same day: > 80%
- Percentage of tickets responded to the same day: 100%