Mac Deployment and Imaging

Q & A from the Webinar - May 22, 2014

Imaging Workflows

Does the imaging workflow automatically include the Recovery HD?

Make sure your imaging workflow creates the Recovery HD partition by following our guide on installing OS X 10.7, 10.8, and 10.9.

Can a Mac be set up with a bare metal image for uniformity and then enrolled in a no imaging policy to allow users to select optional software?

Yes. The Self Service portal is available to any Mac that is enrolled with the Casper Suite. You can use the bare metal imaging workflow, then use Self Service for optional software.

If you drag the install packages over will they install when you image or will you have to install each application?

You can add install packages to the imaging configuration and they will install during the image deployment.

Will the full [bare metal] image require more network bandwidth than the thin image process?

Yes, a full bare metal image will require more network bandwidth to deploy the full operating system. In some cases (such as using the Target Mode Imaging feature over a Thunderbolt connection) the bare metal image may be faster because the OS can be copied using the more efficient block-level copy rather than file-level copy.

Is there a way to push the enrollment process to systems?

Yes. The Recon app can initiate enrollment over the network using SSH. This requires that the Mac has an admin account with SSH enabled.

For bare metal imaging, I'm interested in using Netboot to image and enroll. Is this a one step process or two?

This is a one step process. The enrollment is done as part of the image deployment workflow.

What is the difference between bare metal and thin imaging?

Bare metal imaging starts with erasing the hard drive and installing a new copy of the operating system. Thin imaging leaves the OS in place and adds software and configurations.

We would love to use thin imaging, but it's "chicken & egg" scenario…need to be able to re-image Macs in the future, so we need to keep the "thick" image completely up to date. If we have to do that, why bother with "Thin"?

The Casper Suite is designed to make this as easy as possible. Once you build your bare metal imaging workflow, you can use the same software packages and configurations to build a thin imaging workflow. When you update a software package, it will be available to both "thick" and "thin" image workflows without any extra effort.

If using a bare metal workflow, do you need a different OS package for different model machines or just replace it with a newer version OS package?

In most cases, you can use the same OS package for all Mac models. When Apple releases new hardware, it often ships with a unique OS build until the next point-release update. Refer to this Apple KB article for reference.

Would it be a better practice to install the software on a pre-built image or to push software after the image is installed on the device?

JAMF software

Both workflows are appropriate and will deliver the same outcome. The decision will depend on factors such as how the devices are used (mobile vs. office), the network bandwidth available, and the frequency of changes to the image configurations.

How do you conveniently rebuild a device without an image with thin imaging?

Any modern Mac has a Recovery HD that can be used to re-image the Mac directly from Apple's servers. This can be used to refresh a Mac and start the thin image process.

Can you create an imaging configuration to setup an Admin account?

Yes. Any of the imaging workflows discussed in the webinar (bare metal, thin, or "no image") can create a local admin account on the Mac.

FileVault 2

What is the strategy for FileVault 2 Encryption keys?

Now that the FileVault 2 key escrow is working can we escrow the keys of people who already have FV2 enabled, without decrypting and re-encrypting?

Is there a problem with bare metal imaging support for FileVault 2? Specifically with creating the Recovery partition?

The Casper Suite offers full administration of FileVault 2 on Mac systems that support it. For details on FileVault 2, including encryption key escrow and user management, we published this technical guide.

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Infrastructure

Does Casper Imaging require any additional infrastructure, or can it run as a standalone app?

Casper Imaging is part of the Casper Suite and relies on the JAMF Software Server (JSS) infrastructure.

Is the JSS server hosted locally? Is it part of the suite?

If we're hosting a JSS server does it need to run on OS X server?

The JAMF Software Server (JSS) can be hosted locally on a Mac, Windows, or Linux server. Alternately, you can host the JSS in a cloud you control or JAMF Software can host a JSS on your behalf.

We recommend using the server platform that's most common in your organization. The user experience with the

Casper Suite is the same for each server platform.

Are you able to have multiple sites without multiple servers? You stated that it could be time consuming if you have multiple sites. For example, 18 states within the continental US.

Yes. The Casper Suite can support multiple physical sites from a single server instance. The network traffic between server and managed devices is over HTTPS, and this is easily passed over the public Internet or internal private networks.

Can you tell me how NetBoot works with the Casper Suite?

NetBoot is an Apple technology, similar to PXE for Windows. This offers a method to boot a Mac over the network to allow erasing the internal hard drive in a bare metal image workflow. NetBoot is a feature of the OS X Server app and we offer a NetBoot virtual appliance to host NetBoot from non-Apple hardware.

Can you Netboot into the Casper Imaging UI, i.e. for a mass deployment ?

Yes. You can launch the Casper Imaging app from a NetBoot image.

Does the use of the Netboot/SUS appliance require AWS?

No. NetBoot/SUS can run on a locally hosted server or on a cloud service such as Amazon Web Services (AWS).

What is the infrastructure requirements for Caching?

Any package deployed by the Casper Suite can be cached on the client system. This makes installation much faster, as the package does not need to be copied over the network a second time. This does not require any additional infrastructure beyond the Distribution Point system used by Casper Suite to store and share packages.

Can Casper deploy packages via VPN connection?

Yes. You can deploy packages over a VPN connection using Casper Suite.

What protocols are used for the imaging workflow?

Casper Imaging can use AFP or SMB for image deployment. Packages installed via policy (whether thin imaging or with Self Service) can use AFP, SMB, or HTTP(S) protocol.

What are the benefits of a JSS server in the DMZ?

Putting the JSS server in the DMZ allows management of devices that are away from your private network, such as employees working from home or traveling for business.

Self Service

Do the users need an admin password to install the selfservice plugin?

The Self Service app is automatically installed with the enrollment or imaging workflow. (User-initiated enrollment does require an admin password.) After the one-time enrollment is complete, the user does not need an admin password to use Self Service.

Users can use Self Service to install software even if they do not have admin rights?

Yes. Self Service policies are executed using the Casper Suite management account, so the user does not require local admin rights to install software using Self Service.

Are the categories in self service pre-defined or do you define them yourself (or both)?

You define the categories in Self Service to fit your organization's needs.

Can you leverage Self-Service for OS updates ?

Yes. Self Service can be used for OS and app updates.

Directory Services

What is best way to do AD binding?

Active Directory (AD) binding can be done as part of the imaging workflow or by using a policy from Casper Suite.

Are there any issues / disadvantages with using a Unix-based LDAP instead of Active Directory?

No. Casper Suite supports any LDAP-compatible directory service. Active Directory is a popular choice, but other Unix-based systems will provide a similar authentication experience.

When enrolling in AD from a bare metal imaging configuration, is there a way to define the system name per each device?

Yes. You can set the computer names as part of the imaging workflow. Name by MAC address, serial number, or a custom value. Alternately, you can rename computers as a policy after they're enrolled.

Can the "Join AD" policy be configured to use the Centrify plugin instead of apples native plugin?

Yes. The Casper Suite supports the Centrify plugin for AD along with PowerBroker (formerly Likewise) and ADmitMac from Thursby.

How can we leverage the No Imaging option without a traditional LDAP environment?

LDAP is not a requirement for the user-initiated enrollment. You can create create accounts local to the the JSS for user authentication on the computer enrollment portal.

What is the best way to create a user account?

Using a directory service (such as AD) is one option. Alternately, you can create a local user account as part of the imaging workflow or after imaging using a policy.

Others

How would you handle network drives mapping?

You can set up network drive mapping as a configuration profile with Casper Suite. Look for the "Login Items" payload, part of the User Level configuration profile.

Can you uninstall software using the Casper Suite?

Yes. You can uninstall software using a policy.

How did you get your Inventory result to show OS and users?

You can set the inventory display preferences to choose which fields are displayed. Go to Settings > Computer Management > Inventory Display and select the fields you want to see in the inventory results page.

Why don't you get logs when using Configuration Profiles like you get with Policies?

When you deploy a configuration profile, it will be listed in the "Management History" log in the computer inventory. This log shows when the profile was installed and will list errors if encountered.

Are self provisioned applications only available to the user that installed them, or are they on the system available for any user?

Any application installed to the /Applications folder (the default location) will be available to any user on the system.

After software deployment, how does patch management work? Or would we basically be reinstalling updated versions over and over again?

Patching software depends on how updates are distributed by the software vendor. Many applications release a full new version with each release. In this case, the "patch" is really a full install of the updated version. Some applications (such as Microsoft Office) will issue a package that only includes an update. This type of "patch" can also be deployed using the Casper Suite.

Can you please explain the "Sites" feature?

Sites are a way to delegate management to a subset of devices. For more on Sites, watch this brief overview video: http://www.jamfsoftware.com/resources/casper-suite–9-sites/

Does installation of Apple App Store Software through Self-Service require an Apple ID?

Yes. All software from Apple's App Store requires an Apple ID.

How do you do a request vs. install in Self Service?

The workflow I showed uses a script to generate a new help desk ticket for a software request. Depending on your help desk system, you could use a script to make an API call or send an email.

What does Casper use for policies and configuration data, MCX or Profiles. Can you give us an example of what this configuration data looks like and where it resides?

Casper Suite supports both configuration profiles and MCX. The MCX system was deprecated by Apple and is intended for legacy support only. We recommend using configuration profiles for any new deployments.

With the "no imaging" workflow, can you PUSH software without the user requesting it?

Yes. Policies from the Casper Suite can be offered through Self Service or pushed to the Mac without user intervention.

Is there a certification path for Casper Suite?

Yes. Learn about JAMF Softwares training and certification courses here: http://www.jamfsoftware.com/training/

For information, and to schedule a demonstration, please visit jamfsoftware.com