Managing Apple Devices in a Windows Organization

With the right tool, Windows and Apple can happily coexist in any organization

The recent rise of Apple devices in a previously Windows-dominated ecosystem presents a challenge for IT admins and decision makers. This report outlines how Apple and Windows devices, tools, and infrastructure can happily integrate together.

MICROSOFT MANAGEMENT IS BEST OF BREED FOR WINDOWS

Achieving IT security requirements and meeting organizational goals is easiest when using the best tools for the job.

It's no surprise, then, that Microsoft's System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM or ConfigMgr 2012) has emerged as the clear leader for Windows client management in the enterprise. With native OS integration, ConfigMgr offers premier inventory, deployment, patch management, and IT security capabilities.

Organizations that rely on ConfigMgr have grown accustomed to a certain level of control over their Windows clients and can't imagine lowering that bar because of the introduction of Apple devices in their environment.

But although ConfigMgr offers some basic Apple management capabilities, most enterprise organizations have not embraced it to manage their Apple devices due to it's limited feature set.

LIMITED APPLE SUPPORT WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

Many IT organizations that build their management practices with Microsoft tools have difficulty coping with the influx of iPhone, iPad, and Mac. Adapting management practices to Apple devices and learning a new IT language can be an uphill battle.

IT admins need the right tools and processes to manage Apple devices—at the same comfort level as they have with Windows—without compromising on security, IT standards, or user experience.

An additional obstacle to overcome is the frequency that Apple's iOS and OS X are updated. Unlike Windows, which sees multiple years between major updates, Apple releases a new OS version annually. As an added challenge, new Apple hardware cannot be downgraded— meaning IT groups must support each new OS when it's released.And their management tools must be updated accordingly.

JAMF PRO MANAGEMENT IS BEST OF BREED FOR APPLE

To equip IT groups with the tools to manage all Apple devices, Jamf's Jamf Pro is built specifically for the Apple platform. With native OS integration, the Jamf Pro offers inventory, deployment, and security features for iPad, iPhone, and Mac. The software is updated in step with Apple's OS release schedule, ensuring management continuity and painless upgrades. The Jamf Pro even integrates with the latest Apple technologies, including Apple's innovative Device Enrollment Program (DEP) and Volume Purchase Program (VPP). that helps continually improve learning and student participation, while still driving the student's ability to score well on comprehensive exams.

How the Jamf Pro makes Apple management easy

 Updates with Apple OS releases

 Integrates with DEP and VPP

 Offers familiar reporting capabilities

 Comes with onsite JumpStart and training

QUICK IMPLEMENTATION. EASY INTEGRATION

To accelerate implementation, Jamf provides an on-site JumpStart service for IT admins. The JumpStart is an opportunity to translate Windows management practices and offer recommendations for Apple management techniques. An experienced ConfigMgr admin will find familiar concepts with the Jamf Pro tools, with some implementation differences based on the different platforms. After the JumpStart, IT admins can continue to build expertise with training and certification courses focused on Jamf and Apple technology.

PLATFORM AND REPORTING FAMILIARITY AVAILABLE FOR IT

Jamf recognizes the perceived challenge of supporting a platform traditionally known for consumer devices. One such challenge is the need to report on the security status (encryption, critical security updates, etc.) of all devices. A misguided assumption is that implementing Apple devices will prevent IT from seeing full or similar reports as they are accustomed to.

To alleviate concerns, Jamf provides a ConfigMgr 2007 and ConfigMgr compatible plug-in using the SCCM SDK that gives a single view of all the Apple devices that are managed by the Jamf Pro. These reports are made available right from the familiar Configuration Manager reporting view IT admins are comfortable with.

Conclusion

Using Apple and Microsoft best-of-breed tools gives IT admins the desired amount of control and ability to manage their user's devices. The power of combining the Jamf Pro and ConfigMgr is second-to-none, and makes the transition to managing Apple devices easier than ever before. IT can remain confident in their abilities, even when adopting a new platform.

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