

»»» Only 2 IT staff is needed to handle the entire production network of the New Baiyun Airport



The New Baiyun International Airport, located in the north of Guangzhou City, is one of the three main hub airports of China, the first airport to be designed and constructed by the nation according to a hub airport concept and also the biggest, most advanced and modern international airport in China. In building a modern international airport, Baiyun International Airport attaches great importance to informatization construction and the establishment of a pillar network and computer information system, thus constituting the hub system of the entire Baiyun Airport and realizing the mutual transferring, sharing and support of the airport's information. In order to ensure the efficient functioning of the information system, Baiyun International Airport has adopted LANDesk System and Security Management Solutions to manage more than 1,000 servers and various terminal units of the new airport's information system. At present, it will only require 2 IT management staff to manage the entire construction network and handle security management and maintenance of various terminal units. In this way, IT management tasks such as the upgrading of all terminal software, patch management, desktop support and so on can be easily dealt with.

Potential Problems

During the construction of the new airport, Wang Jinshan, General Manager of the Computer Information Center of Baiyun International Airport, has clearly indicated: "If there is any problem with the airport's Light Current System, the airport will have to be shutdown. As a result, we must adopt effective technical measures to ensure the smooth operation of the new airport's Light Current System and that the new airport's operation procedures are not affected. The production network is the foundation of the entire system's operation, and has to be secure, reliable and without any problem."

The production network of the New Baiyun International Airport can be divided into many VLANs, with more than ten application systems, including many essential operations such as Departure Control System, Flight Information Inquiry System, Information Integration System, Broadcasting System, Security & Guard System and the Flight Information Display System, etc. The smooth functioning of these information systems will have a direct impact on the normal operation of the New Baiyun Airport. How should we ensure the proper operation of the production network then? With the official opening of the airport, this problem must be solved. Among the various factors affecting the normal functioning of the information system, the management of desktops and various terminals has become the key issues here. System upgrading and security management, etc. has caused IT management personnel to be extremely busy. And problems caused by improper operations may also affect the proper functioning of the system.

In the entire production network of the New Baiyun International Airport, there are more than 50 sets of mainframe systems and servers as well as over 1,000 various application terminals, which mainly run Windows operating system. Since these terminals are provided by many suppliers, security configuration and patching of each terminal are uneven, and some are even equipped without any security measures, which facilitate threats like viruses, etc. to spread in the production network. Along with the upgrading of the new airport's various production management systems; another aspect would be to upgrade the relevant terminal units. As these 1,000 plus equipments are distributed all over the new airport, covering an immense area, the limited number of IT management personnel is inadequate in handling all of them. Even if it's just to patch the terminal units in time, it is impossible to complete with the limited number of IT management personnel. And this proves to be a huge challenge for the new airport's IT management personnel. How is it possible to manage well these 1000 plus terminal units with such limited human resources? The New Baiyun International Airport wishes to solve all these problems before its official opening and requires that be it patching or software distribution, they should be highly efficient and at the same time, they should not take up too much bandwidth resources so that production can run properly.

Solutions

Due to the fact that the New Baiyun Airport has large quantities of terminals for its production network, rather complicated application and different standards of terminal subscribers, and taking into account that the existing network structure and normal operation must not be affected by implementing the security project, and should not take up too much bandwidth. After a comprehensive evaluation of several products of the same kind, the New Baiyun Airport finally chose LANDesk Management Suite and LANDesk Patch Manager to satisfy the demands of the desktop system and security management of the New Baiyun Airport, in coordination with Symantec Anti-Virus System. Remote support and software distribution of all terminal units in the airport are fulfilled with the LANDesk Management Suite, which not only greatly reduces frequency of on-site support, but also ensure the smooth operations of the applications and upgrading of software. Through the LANDesk Patch Manager, all terminal units can automatically make security modifications according to the enactment that management personnel made in the central control room. This is fast and convenient, and it has set IT management staff free from large amount of repetitive work.

Successfully installed LANDesk solutions on more than 1,000 terminal units within 3 days

The security project of the new airport was initiated in July 2004, during its resettlement preparation phase. However, the new airport was to be officially opened on August 5, 2004, which demanded that the security project should be finished by the end of July. Time was pressing, and the task arduous. Guangzhou Shi'an Information Technology Co. Ltd., responsible for the implementation of the New Baiyun International Airport's security project, made full use of their abundant experience in system implementation, and along with the new airport's IT management personnel, they focused on the actual conditions and laid down detailed step-by-step measures: initial testing on a small-scale before moving on to full-scale. Li Hanqun of Guangzhou Shi'an Information Technology Co. Ltd. said, "LANDesk Management Suite is very strong in its software distribution. As long as we can validate that this suite is compatible with the existing client terminals of the New Baiyun International Airport and ensure the proper functioning of the original application system, then it will be very convenient to generalize the project. After we have successfully tested on a small scale with the Push Install and Web Setup solutions of LANDesk solutions' software distribution, the implementation task of the whole project was completed in 3 days."

The small-scale tests began on July 10, mainly validating the compatibility of LANDesk solutions with the existing application of client terminals. After a one-week test on compatibility and validity of about 10% of the terminal units, it was confirmed that LANDesk Management Suite and Patch Manager can satisfy the application demand of the new airport's production network, and will not affect the original production operation. Having succeeded in the small-scale tests, the security project was officially implemented on terminal units of the entire new airport from July 18. Push Install was adopted on Windows 2000 terminal units; Web setup was adopted on Windows XP systems and other systems. And finally, within 3 days, the LANDesk solutions and Symantec Anti-Virus Software had been successfully distributed onto the 1000 plus terminal units, and patch edit was conducted on all the units, ensuring that all desktop systems were safely installed with no exceptions.

Installed and initiated patches sized about 130M on more than 1,000 terminal units within 2 hours

Nowadays, new loopholes in the various Internet applications are discovered more and more rapidly. Once a loophole is found, we should patch it immediately, or else the system loophole is likely to be made used of and serious consequences can be caused. Frequent patch updating has become a heavy task. Having deployed LANDesk solutions, the New Baiyun International Airport can easily complete patch updating. Mr. Li said, "Among the 1000 terminal units of New Baiyun International Airport, more than 70% are installed with Windows 2000 system but without timely patch upgrading. After New Baiyun International Airport implemented LANDesk solutions in its IT system, we've managed to patch all the terminals in a timely manner. After the central console had set up the scheduled tasks, it will automatically conduct SP4 patch sized of about 130M on the entire Windows 2000 systematic terminals. The patching work began at 22:00 on July 21. The day after, when we checked the records we found that it only took 2 hours to finish all the patch setup and restart. This is due to the multicast technology adopted by LANDesk Patch Manager. Such technology is able to solve problems of bandwidth occupation, conducts patch distribution in time and gain higher success rate. This is especially significant to the new airport's production network, because we cannot reduce the efficiency of the airport's information system due to patching work."

Small Desktop, Great Effect

In recent years, along with the in-depth development of information construction, enterprises' IT system is swiftly expanding in size, and demands a better IT management system. Such demands are not only shown in the complicated management demand of large computers, but also the management demands of desktop management, mobile devices and servers. However, at present most domestic users only know that they can download patches or install anti-virus software so as to manage the key components of their desktop system, mobile devices and servers, but lack the remote support to their desktop system, integrated software distribution and patch management, etc. Along with the development of information construction and the increase in the number of terminals, it will be very difficult for the traditional management modes to tackle the ever-intensifying security situation and the ever-increasing management demands. To choose an appropriate, effective, stable and compatible desktop management system will be an upcoming challenge for every enterprise. Mr. Li said: "The LANDesk desktop system and security management solution that we have adopted in the New Baiyun Airport's security project gave our clients effective application effect and gained their approval. We believe that desktop system and security management will have a bright future in China."

2 IT workers in charge of the management of the new airport's entire production network.

LANDesk Management Suite is a fully integrated, cross-platform modularization desktop management solution, which can conduct remote control and management towards the desktops of servers and various terminal units within its domination on a single console. The suite can conveniently conduct highly efficient tracking and statistics compilation of the enterprise's complicated and inconstant desktop facility assets, remote setup, configuration operating system and application programs, swiftly assisting the New Baiyun Airport to locate and solve problems. However, the LANDesk Patch Manager is not only an independent solution, but it can also conduct seamless integration with LANDesk Management Suite, thereby transforming the New Baiyun Airport from a single and uniform console into one that has realized a comprehensive patch and configuration management.

Mr. Huang Zhifeng, leader of the New Baiyun Airport Computer Center and person in charge of network security, expressed: "The normal operation of the production network is fundamental for New Baiyun Airport, so we must ensure it is well functioning. LANDesk solutions provided us with efficient systems and security management modes, which not only enable us to safeguard stable and efficient operation of the whole production network, but also sets us free from many complicated and trivial tasks. Now, only 2 IT management staff are needed to be responsible for the entire network management, security and maintenance of all terminal units of the production network supporting the normal operation of the New Baiyun Airport. This was unimaginable before we adopt the LANDesk Management Suite."

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