CERES

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CERES SHIPPING CUTS IT SUPPORT COSTS BY 90% USING ALTIRIS' ONBOARD PC MANAGEMENT

CERES Shipping has implemented Altiris' Deployment Solution to improve IT management, reduce IT support costs and simplify onboard software and hardware installations.

THE SOLUTION
Altiris® Deployment Solution™

ABOUT CERES SHIPPING
Ceres Hellenic Shipping Enterprises Ltd is one of the largest and oldest shipping companies worldwide, doing business in several sectors of the maritime industry, and is specialized in ship management. Ceres is certified since 1988 with the ISO 9002 standard for the quality of services, and was the first ship operating organization in the world to meet the ISO 14001 environmental standard.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT INCLUDE:

> **Altiris Deployment Solution has increased ship-to-shore communication from 50 per cent to more than 95 per cent**

> **Time and cost associated with travelling to ships to provide IT support has reduced by more than 50 per cent**

> **Calls to the helpdesk have reduced dramatically by 90 per cent**

> **Software installation time has been significantly reduced and system reliability has increased**

> **PC recovery is now an instant, hands-free process**

CERES' CHALLENGES
Each of CERES' 41 ships use on average four to eight desktops, one server and one communication system, with the largest ship in the fleet holding twenty desktops. Despite the amount of IT equipment on each ship, there was no IT specialist on board to solve any IT queries or issues. As a result, all IT management and support was provided from a location on shore which required IT staff to physically travel to ships each time it needed to remedy an IT-related problem.

CERES employed three IT staff to maintain its network and helpdesk and install relevant software. One of these employees was required to spend at least one working day travelling from ship to ship in order to install a new PC or software upgrade. This proved to be a huge investment in time and money and consumed a large portion of CERES' annual ICT budget.

A two day trip to a ship to carry out IT maintenance would cost CERES several thousand dollars. Previously, the IT team might have spent four to five days on a ship just to repair an inoperable server that had been infected with a virus, so CERES was keen to find a solution that would cut both the time and money spent on IT support.

Another critical issue for CERES is excellent communication between ships and its headquarters on the shore. Ship-to-shore communication is a daily process and all on-board servers and a majority of PCs are deployed to establish successful communications. With high-level information, such as operational reports, vessel reporting, ship location, PO approvals and vessel reporting, being exchanged regularly between the ships and its headquarters, it is vital for CERES to capture precise and reliable knowledge of every communication within the fleet.

CERES was also experiencing difficulty with the availability and high cost of its broadband connection. The maximum bandwidth was 64K and was shared between four vessels. All communication had to be stored and forwarded at certain times due to the high communication cost, currently about $1 a minute. With broadband connection limited, it was difficult to implement remote control, online inventory, software distribution and patch updates.

In addition, CERES' IT department was finding it difficult to support a heterogeneous environment, containing a range of 80 local area networks (LANs), 110 servers and 500 desktops from three different manufacturers, Dell, HP and IBM, installed within a five year period.

THE SOLUTION
Charged with finding a suitable IT solution provider to help cut IT support costs and standardise its entire network, Charis Nassis, head of IT at CERES, approached Altiris partner, O-mnis Services. Following a full consultation with Dimitris Tselios at O-mnis Services, Nassis was impressed with the scalability and specifications of Altiris' Deployment Solution.

Developed for IT professionals, Altiris' Deployment Solution helps reduce the cost of deploying and managing servers, desktops, notebooks, thin clients and handheld devices from a centralised location with an easy-to-use, automated solution that offers operating system (OS) deployment, configuration, PC 'personality' migration and software deployment across hardware platforms and OS types. The console includes improved image and event replication; support for adding, modifying and deleting computers, jobs and tasks; and support for managing virtual computers.

altiris®
intuitive > manageability

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