

Mobile Office Deployment Is Smooth Sailing For Royal Caribbean Cruises

Rapid iPass Deployment Helps Cruise Line Leader Increase Coverage and Lower Mobile Connectivity Costs

The Challenge: Reducing global connectivity costs while increasing coverage

The Solution: iPass Mobile Office and iPass Device Management

The Result: Reduced connectivity costs by 33% and support calls by 37% while increasing coverage



Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is a global cruise vacation company that operates Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Pullmantur. The company has a combined total of 34 ships in service and six under construction. It also offers unique land-tour vacations in Alaska, Australia, Canada, Europe and Latin America.

THE CHALLENGE

Providing service in the travel industry requires a fair amount of travel. Just ask Royal Caribbean employees who require reliable access to email, reservations systems and other corporate resources as they sail between countries and continents.

Unfortunately, making a connection was becoming an adventure for many of these on-the-go employees due to the lack of global access points offered by Royal Caribbean's remote access provider.

"A lack of points of presence was a growing concern, creating productivity issues for employees and IT support staff," reports Aurora Aday, manager of NetCom Solutions at Royal Caribbean. In addition, the cruise leader was taking a closer look at remote access costs. Royal Caribbean was paying access fees for all users, whether they were active or not, and help desk calls were impacting budgets as well.

After reviewing several proposals, Royal Caribbean decided to make a departure from its previous vendor and move forward with iPass.

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ILEANA GONZALEZ

Manager of Customer Care, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

THE SOLUTION

Royal Caribbean had an ambitious schedule that involved updating all mobile users within two weeks. However, the company needed a way to install iPass Mobile Office and remove the previous remote access client from 800 notebook systems—many of which are mobile at any given time.

That's when an iPass representative informed the company about its Device Management service. Device Management is a simple, cost-effective way to manage remote and mobile devices when they connect to the Internet. Among other capabilities, Device Management includes an intelligent software distribution engine.

In January 2006, the IT crew at Royal Caribbean began a rapid migration to the iPass Mobile Office service. First, the help desk team emailed all remote notebook-equipped employees a link to download the Device Management agent. Once employees clicked on the link, the Device Management service handled the rest.





Since many Royal Caribbean employees use dial-up links as they travel, downloading the 7.9 MB iPassConnect™ client could have presented complications. Fortunately, Device Management cruises through large software distributions. Its intelligent mobility features allow users to remain productive as downloads occur in the background using spare bandwidth. Dynamic bandwidth throttling trickles downloads to mobile systems during periods of user activity and bursts downloads when connections are idle. The solution's resumable download feature lets updates continue where they left off over multiple sessions.

THE RESULT

Royal Caribbean achieved its goal of migrating 800 mobile users to the iPass Mobile Office service within two weeks.

"We had a very short window to deploy the iPass Mobile Office service," says Ileana Gonzalez, manager of customer care at Royal Caribbean. "The training required for Device Management was minimal, and the solution greatly reduced the need for internal resources. Without Device Management our IT staff would have had to create and distribute CDs to many mobile employees."

"iPass Device Management exceeded our expectations for migrating users to the Mobile Office service. Deployment was straightforward for our users and IT staff," states Gonzalez. "It was totally transparent from a user perspective. In fact, no deployment-related issues were reported."

As for the iPass Mobile Office service, Royal Caribbean is equally impressed. According to Gonzalez, "Since using iPass Mobile Office, coverage-related complaints have decreased significantly, and we've achieved the cost reductions we were looking for."

Today, Royal Caribbean only pays access fees for active users using a pooled-minute model, allowing greater flexibility and cost control. The company has realized a 33 percent savings

each month over the company's previous vendor, which charged a license per seat for all potential users. Likewise, the number of remote-access-related trouble tickets is down 37 percent.

Mobile Office also includes Web-based access to iPass intelligent Online Quality (iOQ) reports for real-time connection usage and performance feedback. Royal Caribbean runs iOQ reports each month for cost analysis and internal billing allocation to the business units. The company's help desk also has access to iOQ connection data to accelerate troubleshooting.

With all this being said, Royal Caribbean is very happy it got onboard with iPass.

ABOUT IPASS

iPass Inc. (NASDAQ:IPAS) helps enterprises unify the management of remote and mobile connectivity and devices. With iPass software and services, customers can create easy-to-use broadband solutions for their mobile workers, home offices, and branch and retail locations, complete with device management, security validation, and unified billing. iPass offerings are powered by its leading global virtual network, on-demand management platform and award-winning client software. The iPass global virtual network unifies hundreds of wireless, broadband and dial-up providers in over 160 countries. Hundreds of Global 2000 companies rely on iPass services, including General Motors, Nokia and Reuters. Founded in 1996, iPass is headquartered in Redwood Shores, Calif., with offices throughout North America, Europe and Asia. ■