



PolicyPak Cloud Ensures Easier Group Policy Management

for the Department of Orthopedics & the
Department of Urology at the
University of Wisconsin-Madison



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

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– KEN FANTA

IT Director Dept of Orthopedics & Dept of Urology
University of Wisconsin – Madison



SITUATION



The University of Wisconsin-Madison, founded in 1848, serves as the flagship campus of the University of Madison System, the state's collection of 13 universities and 13 two-year colleges. The UW-Madison is ranked as one of the top research universities in the United States, with a list of 25 Nobel laureates and two Fields medalists associated with the school as alumni, faculty, or researchers.

Ken Fanta, as IT Director for the Department of Orthopedics & Rehabilitation and the Department of Urology at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, faces the challenge of providing services to a diverse set of users and needs. Between the two departments he serves some 350 users, managing some 400 desktop, laptop, and other devices.

Fanta's IT group had been using another product to manage policy. "As we grew, some elements of the product became more complicated, and we found issues where it was actually slowing down our processes," Fanta says. "So we started looking at other policy tools."

SOLUTION



While on a website that Fanta consulted for support for an open-source ticket management application the group was using, Fanta noticed frequent and favorable mentions of PolicyPak from others on the site.

The more Fanta looked into PolicyPak, he noted the robust feature set and ease of use. He deployed PolicyPak Cloud Edition to support both the Department of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation and the Department of Urology.

The departments use PolicyPak to deploy Group Policy with the flexibility required to meet the varied needs of users. The departments use PolicyPak Applications Manager for several third-party applications, including Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Microsoft Office. And Fanta's team is using PolicyPak Admin Templates Manager for the consolidation of Group Policy Objects.

BENEFITS



The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Orthopedics & Rehabilitation and the Department of Urology are enjoying a number of benefits since deployment of PolicyPak, including flexibility to meet their diverse needs, Group Policy management, freedom from scripting, and great customer care.



Easy to Deploy Cloud-based PolicyPak

The UW-Madison's Fanta sees special value in the Cloud-Based PolicyPak because he knows he never needs to deal with product updates.

"PolicyPak was super easy to deploy," Fanta says. "We pushed out the application once, and then never had to worry about whether we were up to date, or which version we were on. With PolicyPak Cloud Edition I know I'm always on the most current version. PolicyPak handles any updates behind the scenes, on the cloud."

Flexibility to Meet Diverse Needs

PolicyPak has proven to be a powerful tool in helping Fanta and his team meet the needs of diverse users across the two departments he serves.

This is a much different experience, as compared to his time in the private sector when he had just one boss to answer to.

"In the private sector when your boss needs something you drop everything to get it done," Fanta says. "Within the university environment I have about 30 bosses. Each physician /faculty member is basically a CEO within the organization. And they have their own way of doing things, and their own unique needs, ranging from working with patients, to doing research, to creating educational materials and making presentations."

He takes the challenge seriously. "My job is to take care of the technology and make the technology work to meet their specific needs."

Fanta uses PolicyPak to create basic policies driven by departmental needs, and more granular policies based upon user roles within the departments—for example, researchers have different needs than someone involved in the finance group or administration.

"Starting from these basic definitions, we can easily fine tune policies to meet the specific criteria of different groups or individuals," Fanta says. "Without the flexibility inherent to PolicyPak it would be extraordinarily difficult to meet such a diverse set of user needs."

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Easier Group Policy Management

PolicyPak Admin Templates Manager makes it easy to reduce and consolidate GPOs and to deploy settings.

"The Admin Templates Manager saves us a lot of time because we can group things together in ways that make working with Group Policy easy," Fanta says. "This makes it much faster and easier to tweak settings within a group—such as turning off screen savers on research computers so that they don't go to sleep, or specifying local storage for e-mail on clinical computers that are subject to specific record storage requirements."



Freedom from Scripting

Fanta likes the wealth of options that PolicyPak provides—and the ease with which the options can be integrated into management of GPOs.

“PolicyPak has greatly expanded what can be done with policy, while keeping everything nice and easy to do,” Fanta says. “You don’t have to be a programmer or script writer to get the benefits from PolicyPak. It is all user-friendly drag and drop, and I’m someone who likes a good graphical user interface.”

Stable Code and Graceful Updates

Fanta appreciates the stability of PolicyPak code, including when new versions are released. The result is a graceful seamless transition from one version to the next.

“I really like the fact that I don’t have to go in and babysit the software,” Fanta says. “PolicyPak is one of the few software packages we have which, whenever there’s been an update, I haven’t had anything break. It just runs in the background and works. The stability of PolicyPak is a huge benefit to our operations.”

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Great Customer Care

PolicyPak’s great customer care was a bit of a surprise for Fanta, who had never encountered such immediate and personalized response to queries. At one point, Fanta wanted to alter policy for mapping printers to groups and individuals. When it looked as if the task would require creating several loopbacks, Fanta contacted PolicyPak to see if there was an easier way.

“I was shocked when Jeremy Moskowitz, the founder of the company, immediately got back to me—with a step-by-step video he had created showing me exactly what I needed to do to map the printers without using loopbacks,” Fanta says. “They still have that video he created for us on the PolicyPak site.”

ABOUT POLICYPAK

PolicyPak Software offers an on-prem and cloud suite of management tools for application, desktop and security settings. PolicyPak helps systems administrators control application and user desktop settings by managing and securing endpoints on physical and virtual Windows desktops. Leveraging existing investments in systems including Group Policy and SCCM or MDM services like Intune or Workspace One, PolicyPak provides consistent and enforced application configuration that enables knowledge workers to be more secure, productive and effective. For more information, visit policypak.com.