

# SIX BILLION SLURPEES AND COUNTING

7-Eleven lowers management costs by 81% and decreases help desk incidents by 67% with remote service management tool from Dell



- SOLUTIONS**
- DESKTOP/LAPTOP REFRESH
  - MOBILITY
  - SERVICES



**CUSTOMER PROFILE**

**COUNTRY:** United States

**INDUSTRY:** Retail and Wholesale

**FOUNDED:** 1927

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 27,000

**WEB ADDRESS:**

[www.7-eleven.com](http://www.7-eleven.com)

**CHALLENGE**

7-Eleven decided to purchase laptops for 2,800 employees to increase productivity while solving its remote service management problem in getting patches, upgrades and anti-virus software to remote employees without forcing them to assist manually.

**SOLUTION**

The company chose a total solution from Dell consisting of Dell™ Latitude™ laptops with Intel® Core™ 2 Duo processors to replace 2,800 existing desktops and laptops, and Dell Distributed Device Management Services to centrally manage the laptops without requiring the assistance of remote employees.

**BENEFITS**

**GET IT FASTER**

- 30-day rollout of solution by Dell Distributed Device Management Services

**RUN IT BETTER**

- 81% decrease in management costs
- 67% reduction in help desk incidents
- 30% increase in productivity
- Increased compliance with business policies governing software installation



7-Eleven, Inc. started out as an ice house in Dallas, Texas, in 1927 and has grown and evolved into the world's largest operator, franchisor and licensor of convenience stores. The company operates, franchises and licenses more than 7,750 stores in North America alone. Internationally, 7-Eleven licensees and affiliates operate more than 29,000 convenience stores around the world. Since 1966, 7-Eleven has sold six billion of the popular Slurpee drinks, enough for every man, woman and child on the planet.

# “THE DELL LATITUDE LAPTOPS WITH INTEL CORE 2 DUO PROCESSORS DELIVER THE PERFORMANCE AND MOBILITY OUR EMPLOYEES NEED FOR STAYING PRODUCTIVE WHEREVER THEY ARE.”

Brian Cator, senior director of information technology, 7-Eleven, Inc.

A vital link in the 7-Eleven marketing structure are 800 field consultants, each overseeing a group of eight to ten stores with a combined revenue between \$10 and \$20 million. They work closely with individual store operators to implement corporate and merchandising strategies and introduce new products. The 800 field consultants are on the move constantly. When they and 2,000 employees in remote offices were due for a desktop/laptop refresh of their existing Dell devices, 7-Eleven decided to purchase laptops for all of them.

## OPTING FOR MOBILITY

“These days, laptops have as much power as desktops,” says Brian Cator, senior director of information technology, 7-Eleven, Inc. “We were certain we could get a productivity gain by allowing employees to take their laptops with them, not only in and around the office but also going home at night.”

Cator's IT group selected Dell Latitude D630 laptops with Intel Core 2 Duo T7500 processors to replace the laptops and desktops used by remote-office and mobile employees. “The Dell

Latitude laptops with Intel Core 2 Duo processors deliver the performance and mobility our employees need for staying productive wherever they are,” says Cator. “The multi-core processors provide plenty of performance for multitasking with standard applications such as Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat, and with the proprietary tools some of our employees use for data analysis. The processors' built-in energy-efficiency features also mean that our field workers can keep working unplugged for longer than ever before.”

A longtime Dell customer, 7-Eleven customized the Latitude D630 with both AT&T Built-in Mobile Broadband (HSDPA) cards and wireless modems to enable field consultants and their colleagues to work and be productive regardless of where they are. This decision raised other questions, however. “We could equip our employees to be mobile, but how could we manage those devices now that they're all mobile?” says Cator.

## 81% DECREASE IN MANAGEMENT COSTS

The company had been using a third-party device manager to push patches,

## HOW IT WORKS

### HARDWARE

- Dell™ Latitude™ D630 laptops with Intel® Core™ 2 Duo T7500 processors

### SOFTWARE

- Microsoft® Windows® XP
- Microsoft Office
- Adobe® Acrobat®

### SERVICES

- Dell ProManage Services
  - Dell Distributed Device Management Services
    - Dell Asset Management
    - Dell Software Distribution
    - Dell Patch Management
    - Dell Anti-Malware and Virus Management
  - Managed Help-Desk Services
- Dell ProSupport for End Users

# “WITH UP-TO-DATE SOFTWARE, FEWER INCIDENTS AND BETTER COMPLIANCE, OUR USER BASE IS 30 PERCENT MORE PRODUCTIVE WITH DELL DISTRIBUTED DEVICE MANAGEMENT SERVICES.”

Brian Cator, senior director of information technology, 7-Eleven, Inc.

upgrades and anti-virus software to desktops and laptops, but the legacy toolset left much to be desired. “The granularity and control for managing those devices simply weren’t there,” says Cator. The tool required end users to intervene in the process and manually accept updates using a wizard tool. “For the most part, our employees are not technologists,” says Cator. “We couldn’t always get that kind of cooperation from them, and more often than not we would end up with a help-desk incident or have the device shipped to us by air freight, driving up costs.”

Operating the third-party option required a staff of 16 technicians, plus a help desk of remote contractors. Because of usability problems with the desktop/laptop management tool, the help desk received upwards of 8,000 calls per month.

Strapped for bandwidth, technicians had to plan months in advance to send a patch. “And then we had a huge nested structure of servers,” says Cator. “To conserve bandwidth, we would push whatever payload we were sending out to a set of intermediary servers which then would further push it out to the clients. The time lags, the complications of that infrastructure and the cost were less than optimal.” To aggravate matters, users would often install unauthorized software on their devices—sometimes disabling

the drivers of their legitimate software, leaving them unable to produce a required report, leading to additional help-desk calls.

The problems were solved with Dell Distributed Device Management Services Version 7.5, part of Dell ProManage Services. A Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution for remote service management, Dell Distributed Device Management Services allows companies to track dispersed assets, distribute software and manage patches—no matter where client machines are located. Dell Distributed Device Management Services manages the application offsite, along with the infrastructure running the application. Immediately, 7-Eleven’s staff of 16 technicians was reduced to three, an 81 percent drop in management costs.

## ENHANCED COMPLIANCE, FEWER CONFLICTS

Not only does the Dell Distributed Device Management Services solution decrease support and management costs, but it has also resulted in better compliance from the field, and fewer application conflicts and issues. Since the machines are now locked down, users cannot install their own software.

“Consider freeware, for instance,” says Cator. “People put freeware that’s licensed for personal use on corporate assets not knowing that it makes the company liable in certain cases. So we

eradicated that problem entirely and got more control.”

## 67% DROP IN HELP-DESK INCIDENTS

Users no longer had to cope with processing the software and patches sent from corporate headquarters because the solution silently installs the software on the laptop without any need for user intervention.

7-Eleven also opted for a Dell ProManage managed help-desk solution, but the help desk has little to do because incidents have decreased dramatically. “We’ve had a 67 percent drop in incidents because of the new Dell Latitude D630 laptops, the silent installation technology of Dell Distributed Device Management Services and our control over what users can put on their computers,” says Cator. “Service is better as well. Many of our calls are now ‘single-shot’ calls, which means they can be resolved on the spot.”

## 30% INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY

Now the company knows that when it has to deploy a patch, it can do so within 24 to 48 hours. “All our laptop software is patched as needed,” says Cator. “This is true not only for Microsoft patches, which are very frequent, but also anti-virus patches, which improve our overall security. And with up-to-date software, fewer incidents and better compliance,

our user base is 30 percent more productive with Dell Distributed Device Management Services. And I sleep better at night.”

### **NO IMPACT ON 7-ELEVEN'S NETWORK**

All the patches and upgrades from 7-Eleven to its remote users are relayed through the Dell Distributed Device Management Services infrastructure, so that the traffic goes through Dell's network, not 7-Eleven's. “We're pretty stingy about bandwidth,” says Cator. “Our WAN and LAN teams stood up and cheered when they heard that this was not going through our network.” By not filling up 7-Eleven's network bandwidth, the Dell service allows that bandwidth to be used for other tasks, which also contributes to increased productivity.

In addition, the solution enables 7-Eleven to conserve bandwidth at its store locations by controlling the amount of the payload going to the client machines, which allows users to work in the background.

### **HELPING TO FULFILL CORPORATE STRATEGY**

7-Eleven is striving to convert virtually all its U.S. stores to franchises, and the Dell solution is helping the company to fulfill that goal. “The next step with Dell laptops and Dell Distributed

Device Management Services may be to provide franchisees with a laptop with software that we can keep up-to-date and secure,” says Cator. “As a franchisee you would receive a laptop, managed services and connectivity from 7-Eleven. This would be a more attractive proposition than asking franchisees to purchase and maintain their own equipment.”

7-Eleven was impressed with how quickly Dell was able to roll out the solution to field consultants and remote office workers in the U.S. and Canada. “We were able to go from zero to full deployment very, very quickly,” says Cator. “The other thing that impresses me about the Dell solution is the scalability. I have no doubt that if I call Dell and say ‘Roll this out to another 2,000 users,’ Dell would be able to do that very quickly. I simply have not seen Dell's speed and agility with any other vendor.”

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