

»»» PC administration on land, at sea, by air



LANDesk® Management Suite has played a key role in helping DFDS A/S implement a standard, more reliable platform for its 1,600 PCs located at its head office in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 25 local offices throughout Europe, the Baltics and Russia, and on its ferries. By using the LANDesk solution's remote-control facilities, DFDS A/S is able to manage and support all PCs from the central IT-department in Copenhagen and this has increased the company's ability to respond to customers' needs around the clock without escalating costs.

A reputation for service

DFDS A/S operates six state-of-the-art ferries and 59 cargo ships on 30 routes between Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Holland, the UK, and the Baltics. The company's history goes back for almost 140 years, during which time it has always maintained a reputation for providing unrivalled service to its numerous passengers. Key to this success has been a willingness to change with the times and adopt new business methods to improve efficiency.

Torben Rasmussen, Head of Section at DFDS A/S, explains: "The company is increasingly dependent on its growing network of PCs. So, centralized control and efficient network management is a key issue to us. LANDesk Management Suite is a cost-effective solution that provides all the management tools we need to run our highly decentralized PC-network.

Taking inventory

The LANDesk solution was taken onboard back in 2000 when DFDS A/S decided to standardize on a Windows® 2000 platform. LANDesk performed from day one and made it possible for the IT-department in Copenhagen to complete a detailed inventory on all PCs no matter where they were located.

"If we had needed to send an engineer to check every PC involved, it would have been very expensive and time-consuming, as many of the PCs are scattered throughout Europe. The LANDesk solution was invaluable because it allowed us to update or replace systems very quickly in order to begin our major migration programme", says Torben Rasmussen.

Ship-to-shore control

Today LANDesk Management Suite is the nerve-center between the head office and the local offices, harbours and ferries. All network administration is run out of Copenhagen including distribution of patches and software updates as well as remote support of all PCs. This is of critical importance to the company which is totally dependent on a stable network running round the clock.

Business Needs

- Standardising on a Windows® 2000 platform for 1.600 PCs and providing remote support to multiple locations both on mainland Europe and at sea

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite
- LANDesk® Trusted Access

Business Benefits

- Enhancing customer service and satisfaction with more reliable systems
- Achieving cost savings through remote problem solving and tighter control of software licences
- Reducing downtime and increasing availability at all times — even when ferries are at sea

“One of the main features of LANDesk Management Suite is its remote-control facilities. Using the product’s web interface, we can take over any PC on the network, regardless of its location, then diagnose and fix the problem. This is a major benefit because our PCs are more diversely situated than most”, explains Torben Rasmussen.

Satelite communication

Of the 1’600 PCs, only 300 are located in Copenhagen and another 950 are based in local offices. There are also 350 PCs installed on the ferries themselves:

“The ability of LANDesk Management Suite to provide remote control at sea is obviously a very attractive benefit for us. All communication with the PCs on the ferries is transmitted via satellite and this works impeccably. We can both update and remote control the PCs while they are at sea”, says Torben Rasmussen.

“Although the ferries dock in Copenhagen regularly, they rely heavily on the on-board PCs both on the bridge and in the restaurants, bars and shops. There is only limited IT expertise on the ships, so if there was a PC failure during a crossing it could have a significant impact on our customers. The LANDesk solution helps us to meet our high standards at all times”.

Without reservation

Maintaining service at sea is obviously important, but it is not the most critical role of LANDesk Management Suite, as Torben Rasmussen explains: “Our key application is our reservation system. This enables customers to book not only tickets, but also hotels and transport of cargo. In an average year our passenger ships transport 1.8 million passengers and 200,000 cars so it is essential that we handle all enquiries quickly and efficiently.”

“If just one PC on the network fails, our ability to take bookings is reduced and we can lose potential customers. This is why LANDesk Management Suite is such an important tool for us and where it has delivered the best return on investment.”

Full steam ahead.

The next important step DFDS A/S is taking is to implement LANDesk Trusted Access. As before, the company is working closely together with LANDesk’s Danish partner, Syscom, on this project.

Torben Rasmussen explains: “Network security is becoming more and more vital to the company as we have many external users on our network. LANDesk Trusted Access is a policy based software solution with strong control facilities that will help us keep up the strict security measures that are key to a mission critical IT-system as ours.”

Meanwhile, for all other applications, LANDesk Management Suite has already more than proved its worth — both on land, at sea and in the air.

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TORBEN RASMUSSEN
HEAD OF SECTION
DFDS A/S



Corporate Headquarters

698 West 10000 South
Suite 500
South Jordan, Utah 84095

www.landesk.com

FOR PRODUCT INFORMATION

- Brazil + (55 11) 3048-4080
- Canada and U.S. + 1-800-982-2130
- China + 8610-8518-3138
- France + 33 0810 000 212
- Germany + 49(0) 89/90405740
- Ireland + 353 (0)1 809 4268
- Italy + 39 (02) 72 54 64 64
- Japan + 81 (3) 3435-8261
- Korea + 82-2-706-9510
- Mexico + 52 (55) 5061-4933
- U.K. + 44 (0) 118-902-6200

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