



Picture perfect IT management

Shutterfly deploys servers and systems management appliance to keep customers coming back and increase IT visibility



Customer profile

SHUTTERFLY INC

Organization Shutterfly, Inc.
Industry Technology
Country United States
Employees 1563
Website shutterflyinc.com

Business need

Shutterfly sought to improve website availability and automate software updates and patching processes for its growing IT infrastructure.

Solution

Shutterfly implemented Dell PowerEdge servers and the Dell KACE™ systems management solution to ensure reliability and automate software deployment and patching.

Benefits

- Shutterfly can easily provision its website during peak times
- Company can ensure high availability and a better customer experience
- IT gains better visibility into infrastructure and reduces operating costs
- Shutterfly can improve compliance and grow into the future

Solutions featured

- [Endpoint Systems Management](#)
- [Servers](#)

“We can deliver a more reliable experience with the Dell solution, so customers will keep coming back.”

Geoffrey Weber, CIO, Shutterfly Inc.

Founded in 1999, Shutterfly Inc. is a leading manufacturer and digital retailer of high-quality personalized products and services offered through a family of lifestyle brands. The company's primary brand is Shutterfly, a website that makes it easy for consumers to upload, edit, organize, share and preserve their digital photos.

"Soon after we implemented the Dell servers in our data center, we saw our availability in peak season go from a miserable number to close to 100 percent uptime. At the end of the day, that is fundamentally the most important thing for our company from a revenue perspective."

*Geoffrey Weber, CIO,
Shutterfly Inc.*

Other family brands include Tiny Prints, Wedding Paper Divas, and Treat — all of which offer stationery and cards — as well as MyPublisher, ThisLife and BorrowLenses.

For Shutterfly Inc., having the right technology in place is a key to business success. "Technology is really everything," says Geoffrey Weber, the company's CIO. "Shutterfly is 100 percent online and 100 percent dependent on technology that's high-performing, functional and cost-effective."

To give its customers the best possible experience, the company needs to ensure that its website is highly available and responsive. "If our customers come to the site and it's slow, they will go to a competitor," Weber says. "They only have a finite amount of time to get a holiday card finished, and if they're not having a great experience, they're not coming back." To improve the customer experience, Shutterfly wanted to increase server reliability, particularly during peak periods such as holidays. "Our peaks occur between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, when we see roughly one-third of our revenue come through," states Weber. "That peak is also important to us as we consider how we scale and how much gear we buy and provision for that time. If we don't have the capacity, it could be a catastrophe we can't recover from in terms of the business."

Additionally, because of steady growth, the company wanted to simplify IT management by finding a new systems management solution.

"We're growing fast, and along with that growth comes pain around things like asset management," states Weber. "For example, in the fourth quarter of every year we add 1,200 customer service representatives, and it's challenging to provision all those employees with an IT team of just four people. We needed a tool to automate software updates, patches and inventory."

Shutterfly implements a Dell server and systems management solution

According to Weber, Shutterfly explored a number of different server and systems management technologies before deciding on Dell. "As we evaluated a number of organizations, Dell kept rising to the top, in terms of the quality, performance and cost of the equipment." The relationship was also a key factor. "I wasn't looking to build a relationship with someone who was going to be a ticket-taker," he says. "I was looking for a partner to work side by side with us to explore new technology, and Dell provided that." Dell also gave Shutterfly a roadmap into the future.

Technology at work

Hardware

Dell PowerEdge R710 rack servers

Dell PowerEdge R720xd rack servers

Software

Dell KACE™ K1000 Systems Management Appliance

“In my experience, Dell has always been helpful in sharing what its direction is, and it’s extraordinarily important for us to know that what we’re building and provisioning today has a lifespan into the future.”

The company worked with Dell engineers and technology partner Applied Computer Solutions to replace its Sun servers with Dell PowerEdge R710 and R720xd servers, which are now used to manage internal storage and power the Shutterfly website. “We were already standardized on Dell desktops and laptops in our offices, so we knew Dell was reliable,” Weber states. “And we were also impressed with the performance of the PowerEdge servers.”

Shutterfly also implemented the Dell KACE™ K1000 Systems Management Appliance, which automates software distribution and patching and eases inventory and asset management. “We looked at a bunch of solutions, but decided to go with KACE because of the price and ease of use,” says Weber. Shutterfly is using the appliance to manage 1,400 employee desktop PCs and laptops, and it is taking advantage of the solution’s built-in help-desk capabilities.

Shutterfly is now powering its entire IT infrastructure with Dell. “Dell is the technology at the core of all of our brands,” Weber remarks.

Shutterfly can easily provision its website during peak times

Shutterfly can more easily meet peak website demand because of the flexibility of the Dell PowerEdge servers. “By standardizing on Dell PowerEdge servers, we gave our data center team the ability to predictably scale and understand how many servers they need to provision for our peak season,” says Weber. “Because the technology is flexible enough, they can deploy several different server configurations, so it’s much simpler for them to determine how much capacity they

need.” As a result, Shutterfly can better manage site traffic during the busy holiday periods each year.

Company can ensure high availability and a better customer experience

The organization can also offer higher availability for its website, thanks to the reliability of the Dell hardware. “Reliability is not even an issue anymore. This gear works, and it lasts,” says Weber. “Soon after we implemented the Dell servers in our data center, we saw our availability in peak season go from a miserable number to close to 100 percent uptime. At the end of the day, that is fundamentally the most important thing for our company from a revenue perspective.”

With higher uptime, Shutterfly customers now have a better overall experience. “If our customers don’t have a great experience, they will find another site, and we don’t want that. We can deliver a more reliable experience with the Dell solution, so customers will keep coming back.”

IT gains better visibility into infrastructure and reduces operating costs

The Shutterfly IT team now has a better picture of the company’s IT infrastructure through the KACE appliance. “We didn’t have visibility into the environment previously, but with the KACE appliance, we get a 360-degree view of everything,” says Weber. As a result, the team has been able to get a clearer view of the IT resources being consumed, which helps reduce costs. He says, “With KACE, we were able to look at all our licensed software and see that many people weren’t using software we were paying for.” Additionally, because the company has automated software updating and patching capabilities, it does not have to hire additional IT resources. “We would have had to hire more people to handle IT management for our growing infrastructure without KACE,” says Weber.



Company can improve compliance and grow into the future

Shutterfly can improve its software compliance with the KACE solution. "With KACE, we can easily manage all of our internal IT resources, including laptops and desktops, so we can see if we're in compliance with our software licensing," says Weber. "For example, we can see if there's software running on someone's laptop that shouldn't be installed. As we continue to grow, we'll be able to make sure that we can maintain our internal policies."

The company plans to continue working with Dell as it grows its IT infrastructure in the future. "We'll continue to have conversations with Dell as we scale and evolve," Weber says. "The end-to-end experience with Dell has been great, from acquiring hardware and getting it installed to having it supported. Dell hits on all those things very solidly, and we are enthusiastic about our relationship."

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