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Andrew Jones

LOCATION

USA | Vidalia, LA

INDUSTRY

Government

ENDPOINTS

100

PRODUCTS

NinjaOne Basic + Splashtop,
NinjaOne Ticketing

CHALLENGE

Andrew Jones, an IT technician, along with two others manage the City of Vidalia’s information technology needs, which includes the City Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, Utility Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and more.

In 2019, Vidalia was subject to a ransomware attack due to poor vendor practices. They decided to regain control of their IT infrastructure. As part of that effort, Vidalia purchased NinjaOne to provide visibility, control, and security across their systems.

SOLUTION

Leveraging technology to keep the IT team lean

The City of Vidalia has a lean IT team with only three full-time technicians. Even so, the departments they support expect results. NinjaOne enables Andrew’s team to streamline some of the most manual, time-intensive tasks to free-up time to better support their users.

“Ninja’s automated patch management feature has been very beneficial for us,” says Andrew, “We’re running scans and installing updates daily, and automating weekly reboots on workstations every weekend away from peak hours. We still manually reboot servers so we can minimize downtime, but otherwise patching is fully automated.” Prior to NinjaOne, the City of Vidalia had an employee who dedicated 20 – 30 hours per week to traveling between locations, manually updating endpoints, and running Anti-Virus scans. They’ve shifted almost an entire employee salary from scanning and patching to other critical IT tasks.

Automation doesn’t stop at patch management. “With Ninja, our IT asset inventory is fully automated and updated live. This makes a huge difference because now when we go to do hardware upgrades, we’re looking at real-time device configurations, not what our assets were six months ago,” explains Andrew.

→ How the City of Vidalia, LA Drives Security and Compliance with NinjaOne

“As someone who has worked with an RMM software package in the past, two things really stand out: Ninja’s ease-of-use and Ninja’s support. I love how easy it is to learn Ninja, and I love being able to pick up my phone and talk to a person.”

Achieving compliance

“Compliance is very important for the agencies we manage, from CJIS compliance for our Police Department to PCI compliance for City Hall. Automating patch management through Ninja allows us to keep our operating systems up to date, making both achieving compliance and reporting on compliance far easier,” says Andrew.

The City of Vidalia also uses NinjaOne to ensure drives are encrypted and automatically collect BitLocker encryption keys in case a drive needs to be recovered.

“Like many municipalities, our cyber insurance company requires us to enforce multifactor authentication across the tools we use,” says Andrew. Ninja enforces multifactor authentication not just for user login, but also when technicians take actions that could have significant security implications, such as creating new users, modifying scripts, or accessing credentials.

“We really like the fact that user history and actions are recorded and can be reported on. It gives some of the department director heads comfort knowing that we only remote in whenever there’s an issue, and questions can be asked if there are any doubts. Accountability for a user’s actions within a position of power is important,” says Andrew.

“With Ninja, the three of us are able to manage the IT needs of the entire city centrally and remotely so they can keep our city running and safe.”

Building a more secure network

Andrew and his team rely on NinjaOne to address unexpected security vulnerabilities. “When there was a ransomware outbreak wreaking havoc across the country about a year ago, I used the scripting feature to

disable SMBv1 across all our devices. When there was a vulnerability with the Dell SupportAssist software, we used NinjaOne to create a list of all devices that had the software installed, then remoted into each and removed the software.”

Webroot through NinjaOne provides antivirus protection for the city. “While we have firewalls for employees who are in the office and on the network, we’ve rolled out Webroot’s DNS content filtering to protect remote employees.” If employees must work outside the office, they’ve leveraged NinjaOne’s end-user sharing feature. “We don’t need to open the network or provide a VPN for employees who need to access on-network resources from home. We set them up as end-users in NinjaOne and they can access their resources from anywhere, without compromising network security,” says Andrew.

The NinjaOne difference

While Andrew had experience with RMM solutions, the other technicians at City of Vidalia did not. “Within a couple of days, everyone on the team had a clear understanding of NinjaOne. We didn’t need training and there was no drawn-out implementation process. We purchased NinjaOne and got started managing our infrastructure immediately. We started deploying to all of our departments while still in our 30-day trial, as we had already decided we were moving forward with Ninja.” explains Andrew.

“NinjaOne’s support is really amazing. I can call or email our account manager at any time. If there is an issue in Ninja or Webroot, she’s super reliable getting us to the right person to support us,” says Andrew. “We’re a small team managing many different departments across our city. Each of those departments has its own location. With Ninja, the three of us are able to manage the IT needs of the entire city centrally and remotely so they can keep our city running and safe.”

Start your free 14-day trial today!

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