ninjaOne.

stellar

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Brian Ellison

LOCATION	INDUSTRY	ENDPOINTS	PRODUCTS
USA | Jacksonville, FL	Real Estate	700	Ninja Professional

CHALLENGE

From food processing plants and healthcare facilities to refrigerated warehouses, automated production lines and beyond, Stellar offers an integrated approach to building solutions.

In early 2020, Stellar was in the process of transitioning their IT infrastructure from a centralized office-focused VPN-centric model to a cloud-managed model. As an architecture, engineering, and construction firm, Stellar has a significant portion of their workforce in the field and only about 30% of employees in an office at a given time. Stellar's highly distributed workforce made the existing IT management framework untenable. "Like most IT organizations in our industry, we've always faced challenges when managing field devices," says Brian Ellison, VP of Information Services at Stellar. "Pushing out patches or new software was unreliable because employees were off network for long periods and remote support required the users to find somewhere with reliable service, get on the VPN, and wait while we solved their problem."

When COVID-19 hit, the process of modernizing their IT management toolset was accelerated significantly. "Everyone was pushed out of the office to work from home. While we've always had to provide support to employees in the field, we suddenly had to support our knowledge workers remotely as well. The toolset we had just did not allow for that," says Brian.

"We started out looking for cloud-based versions of the software we had for software deployment, patching, and inventory management," says Brian. When the Stellar IT team did come across remote monitoring and management Brian was surprised to see that a single tool could replace

→ How Stellar uses NinjaOne to support a fully remote workforce

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many of the point solutions, they were using for endpoint management. "We were able to replace our software deployment, IT inventory, endpoint configuration, remote control, and antivirus solutions with NinjaOne, significantly reducing the complexity of our IT management technology stack and saving licensing costs," explains Brian.

SOLUTION

"The immediate result of adopting NinjaOne was that Stellar was able to transition our knowledge workers to a work from home situation with minimal impact on productivity or end-user satisfaction," says Brian. By moving their entire IT management stack to the cloud, Brian and his team are much better able to monitor and manage devices used by employees in the field. "Ongoing maintenance and support for employees and devices in the field was a big gap for us that we had planned to solve in the long run and were fortunately able to solve with NinjaOne."

Brian's team has also seen significant improvements by leveraging Ninja to automate the new employee device onboarding process. Stellar's IT team deploys a vanilla Windows image to new devices via their supplier along with an MDM profile and a NinjaOne agent. Brian's team then applies a NinjaOne policy based on the user's role which then applies device configurations, installs needed applications, runs login scripts, and more. "We have different new device setup policies for project managers, engineers, and others that allow us to onboard new devices 100% remotely. We've been able to cut device setup time by at least half," says Brian.

Stellar is currently piloting a new use case for NinjaOne. "We're piloting a program where we use NinjaOne to manage the Windows machines that run refrigeration units at our clients' sites. These are simple Windows boxes that are responsible for monitoring and maintaining temperature in refrigeration units for food processing and warehousing. Since we can monitor these endpoints and manage them more effectively, I believe we'll be able to monetize this as a service for our clients," says Brian.

"Ninja added a lot of value to what we were trying to do above and beyond replacing our legacy tools. We use every single capability NinjaOne offers. Even if most of our knowledge workers come back to the office post-pandemic, we won't be going back to an on-network IT infrastructure. Our move to the cloud with NinjaOne makes us much better equipped to manage our highly distributed field workforce and makes my team more efficient."

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