

# Success Story: Providence Health



**Customer Profile:** Providence Health & Services is a not-for-profit Catholic health care ministry committed to providing for the needs of the communities it serves. The health system spans five states – Alaska, California, Montana, Oregon and Washington – with its system office located in Renton, Washington.

**Challenge:** Manually fulfilling numerous one-off software requests was wasting hundreds of hours of valuable IT staff time annually, and employees often waited for up to four days to receive desktop applications they needed to do their jobs. Moreover, IT had limited visibility into license usage. As a result, there was a tendency to overbuy licenses to reduce the risk of breaching contract terms and, as a result, being hit with financial penalties.

**Solution:** With Flexera Software App Portal (formerly SCCM Expert Self Service) is empowering Providence employees with a self-service portal that lets them order desktop applications with a few clicks. Applications are delivered without intervention from IT, saving hundreds of hours of staff time. Additionally, a centralized dashboard provides alerts on license availability and usage, enabling IT to avoid overbuying licenses while ensuring compliance with contractual obligations.

**Benefits:** With Flexera Software's help and expertise, the client was able to deliver a professional and reliable install experience that met all requirements, was on time, and within budget.

*"With App Portal, I now have 320 hours that I can spend on more critical tasks. And users no longer have to wait four days to get an application. People have their applications within a couple of hours and they can be productive right away."*

**Jason Andersen**  
Software Deployment Specialist  
Providence Health & Services



**Employees at Providence Health Plans can select from 200 items in an online catalog of desktop applications. Applications are delivered in two hours or less, without any effort on the part of IT.**

Providence Health & Services is a leader in the health care industry. This not-for-profit organization maintains its leadership role by continually focusing on adopting new approaches and evolving its practices to achieve the highest standards.

Providence has earned high marks and garnered recognition for excellence. In 2012, for example, Thompson Reuters ranked Providence among the top 20 percent of best-performing systems in the U.S. in its 2012 *Top 15 Health Systems* study. This annual quantitative study recognizes the 15 health systems setting the highest benchmarks.

Providence employees rely on sophisticated computing systems to support virtually every aspect of patient care. Desktop applications play a vital role in many aspects of their day-to-day

efforts, from sending email and scheduling appointments to delivering patient care and tracking patient health.

The IT staff prides itself on finding innovative ways to support the diverse user community. Providence Health Plans, a part of the integrated delivery system of Providence Health & Services, implemented a new approach for fulfilling one-off requests for desktop applications. The approach involved creating a service catalog and presenting applications to users through Flexera Software App Portal. Users pick the applications they want and submit their requests using a familiar browser interface. The request triggers an automated workflow that moves the request through any necessary approvals and then deploys the software through Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager 2007.

#### Higher Productivity/Lower IT Costs

Providence Health Plans uses System Center Configuration Manager to roll out software to approximately 700 desktop and laptop computer users. According to Jason Andersen, software deployment specialist, this approach works well for large-scale rollouts and upgrades.

However, manually fulfilling individual application requests was taking a lot of time. While the time spent per request was only about eight minutes, he was receiving nearly 2400 requests a year. Servicing these requests accounted for 320 hours of his time.

"What's worse," Andersen notes, "because of the volume of requests, people often had to wait to get the software they needed. The amount of time it took to deliver an application varied depending on how much time I had available to service requests. The SLA [service level agreement] was four days. That had a big impact on employee productivity."

When Andersen learned about App Portal, he realized immediately that it could address not only IT's need to free up staff time but also the user community's need for faster access to desktop applications.

#### Rapid Ramp-up

App Portal was fast and easy to deploy, taking less than a day for installation. Andersen was able to complete the deployment on his own, without spending money on outside consultants.

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Setting up the approval workflow was also simple and straightforward. Andersen tailored the approval process to meet Providence's unique needs. Some applications do not require approvals. The workflow ensures that these applications are delivered to the requester's desktop within 10 minutes after a request is submitted.

Other applications require three to five approval stages. Requests for these applications are routed through the approval process automatically, saving time and ensuring that requests are handled consistently and reliably. These applications are now typically delivered within two hours, enabling users to become productive much more quickly than in the past.

With App Portal in place, end users can request software and hardware from a selection of 200 items in the self-service catalog. Andersen incorporated built-in questionnaires to gather detailed information from requesters, helping to ensure transparency and swift approvals.

### Tangible and Intangible Results

In addition to saving 320 hours of Andersen's time, App Portal is also delivering measurable ROI through license reclamation. Tight integration with System Center Configuration Manager means that App Portal has access to detailed software metering data. IT can use that data to better optimize license usage.

"App Portal notifies me when license usage exceeds the number of licenses we have purchased," Andersen says. "I can see at a glance who is using licenses and which machines are active. So I have total visibility for true-up licensing. And I can pull back licenses if I need to."

For example, Andersen recently received a notification indicating that usage of Microsoft Visio was exceeding contractual limits. He immediately launched a reclamation campaign by email and brought utilization back into compliance with contract terms. With this capability, Providence is reducing the risk of financial penalties that could result from inadvertently using more licenses than the contract allows.

### Next Steps

The success of App Portal at Providence Health Plans has caught the attention of other business units within the Providence family. "I am now working with other SCCM specialists to extend this benefit nationally through Providence Health System, which covers all our hospitals," Andersen explains. "We are currently evaluating a roll-out across Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho and other regions."

### Conclusion

App Portal is helping Providence to increase employee and IT productivity and cut IT costs by:

- Presenting desktop applications to users through an intuitive, Web-based interface that requires no learning curve
- Delivering applications that don't acquire approvals within 10 minutes
- Delivering applications that require approvals within two hours
- Eliminating hundreds of hours of cumbersome, repetitive manual efforts for the IT staff
- Ensuring compliance with contract terms for software license usage

"With App Portal, I now have 320 hours that I can spend on more critical tasks," Andersen concludes. "And users

no longer have to wait four days to get an application. People have their applications within a couple of hours and they can be productive right away."

### About Flexera Software

Flexera Software is the leading provider of strategic solutions for Application Usage Management; solutions delivering continuous compliance, optimized usage and maximized value to application producers and their customers. Flexera Software is trusted by more than 80,000 customers that depend on our comprehensive solutions - from installation and licensing, entitlement and compliance management to application readiness and enterprise license optimization - to strategically manage application usage and achieve breakthrough results realized only through the systems-level approach we provide. For more information, please go to: [www.flexerasoftware.com](http://www.flexerasoftware.com)

### Next Step:

For more information go to: [www.flexerasoftware.com/app-portal](http://www.flexerasoftware.com/app-portal) or contact a Flexera Software representative.



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