



Erasmus MC introduces uniform workplace and packages with Packaging Robot

The organization

The Erasmus MC is the largest university hospital complex in the Netherlands. Nearly 13,000 employees are dedicated to providing research, education and patient support services. The medical center, which also includes the Faculty of Medicine, the pediatric hospital Erasmus MC-Sophia and the oncology center Erasmus MC-Daniel den Hoed, is located in different areas of Rotterdam. The Information Board (DI) of the Erasmus MC provides services in critical information, ICT and medical technology. The realization of these services occurs in close consultation with end users.

Erasmus MC in 1970 took the first steps toward automation by developing the ZIS (Ziekenhuis Informatie Systeem (Hospital Information System)) and deployment of terminals. The early Nineties marked the advance of PC graphic operating systems within the medical center. Almost hundred different applications varying from personnel and payroll systems to patient systems are currently running on centralized computers.



Voordelen

- Standardized workplace
- High availability applications
- Centralized IT management
- Service level improvement

Proliferation

The use of the PC has led to proliferation of PCs and servers: Erasmus MC currently has no less than 9,000 PCs, about 450 servers and a few hundred applications in use. 'We have nearly 13,000 employees, including some 3,500 nurses and 1,500 physicians. Individuals from different departments use their PCs for different purposes,' says Peter van Vuuren, project manager SOM of the Information Board. 'This has produced a mountain of programs. Nearly 200 applications are registered centrally but there are a great number of programs that we cannot classify or understand. Moreover, different versions of applications and operating systems are generally used at the same time.' The great diversity makes for a complex and time-consuming management process, which manifests itself in plurality of times helpdesk employees are called in to fix a PC problem.

Structured installation process



Fully manageable

To end its management issues, Erasmus MC launched the “Software op Maat” (Made to Measure Software) project, a.k.a. SOM in 2007. Working closely with BRAIN FORCE, the two companies are using the Infrastructure Framework and Desktop Manager to develop a standard workplace for all users. The servers are based on Microsoft Windows Server 2003 and the PCs on Microsoft Windows XP. A more systematic approach is also being taken to the distribution and installation of applications.

‘We aim to drastically reduce the number of interruptions and management time.’

Van Vuuren: ‘The idea behind the Software op Maat (SOM) project is to make the almost 9,000 PCs currently in use fully manageable within two years. The PCs will generally look the same with the same basic programs. Fully enclosed workplaces will be provided for the outpatients’ clinics and more open systems for employees requiring very specific applications. We have also structured the installation process with the BRAIN FORCE OTAP method, where each application is thoroughly tested before being released to production.’ The standard workplace also fixes the physical management problem. ‘If a user runs into problems, his software will quickly be remote reinstalled and he can resume work,’ according to Van Vuuren.

Automatic packaging with Packaging Robot

To ensure continuous availability of applications and automatic distribution from a centralized location, MSIs will be generated of all applications. Until recently, all application packages were made and tested in BRAIN FORCE’s automated Packaging Factory in Veenendaal. ‘We provided the packaging specifications through the web-based workflow tool Process Manager and received the MSI packages the following week. This was our black box,’ says Software op Maat (SOM) technical project manager Jeroen van Dam. ‘Having purchased Packaging Robot, we can now package, test and document applications ourselves.’

Packaging Robot lets you automatically package, test and document software applications. ‘Packaging Robot means that we are the ones gaining the expertise and lets us be much more flexible about application management. We can respond much more quickly. If there’s something wrong with an application, it can be put through the Packaging Robot again the same day,’ says Van Dam.



Peter van Vuuren (left) and
Jeroen van Dam (right)

High-quality applications



Packaging for Citrix

The line of workplace at Erasmus MC consists of fat clients and a test run with Citrix clients. The intention is to facilitate remote access for mobile employees, e.g. physicians and nurses, to thin clients and to enable ID card login to any computer. 'On inserting the card in the computer, the employee's session will open automatically. This way, a physician can go from room to room and always have access to his applications and data,' according to Van Dam.

'We provide higher service performance levels with lower management efforts.'

To keep the management transparent and offer the same high-quality applications as before, all applications will be made suitable for automatic software distribution to the Citrix and fat clients. Van Dam: 'By making smart use of the options that MSI has to offer, we generate with Packaging Robot one application package that is distributed to both clients.'

All information at hand

The adoption of SOM has substantially improved IT infrastructure stability and manageability. 'High availability of systems and a stable workplace are essential to the quality of the services provided by Erasmus MC. Information is becoming increasingly digitized. Paper information on patients is saved in electronic patient files and all medical photos are available in digital format. The same also applies to all management information. A problem free working client is imperative.'

Producten

- ▶ *BRAIN FORCE Infrastructure Framework
best practice workplace and backoffice
configuration*
- ▶ *BRAIN FORCE Packaging Robot®
automatic packaging, testing and
documentation*
- ▶ *BRAIN FORCE Process Manager™
ensures a perfect workflow*

BRAIN FORCE The Netherlands is an ICT supplier that simplifies complex technology and gives its customers maximum control over their server and desktop infrastructure, applications and processes. We design, implement and maintain solutions for the optimization of the IT infrastructure and the automation of application management. BRAIN FORCE is the supplier of the well-known and successful Packaging Robot® for the automatic generation of SoftGrid and MSI packages.

BRAIN FORCE is Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and possesses five competencies. Besides this, BRAIN FORCE is VMware Enterprise Partner, Citrix Partner and NEC Preference Partner. BRAIN FORCE The Netherlands (Veenendaal) is part of BRAIN FORCE HOLDING.

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