



## Desktop Upgrade Boosts Productivity, Reduces IT Effort for Global Advertising Company

### Overview

**Country or Region:** United States  
**Industry:** Media and entertainment

### Customer Profile

Wunderman, a global network of specialized advertising and marketing companies, is headquartered in New York City and has more than 130 offices in 55 countries.

### Business Situation

Wunderman wanted to make users more productive and reduce the time spent maintaining operating system images, of which it had more than 30 for its New York office alone.

### Solution

The company decided to standardize on Windows 7 Professional and is using the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit to optimize image management and deployment.

### Benefits

- Increased productivity through improved navigation, PC performance, search, battery life, and connectivity
- Significant decrease in IT effort to manage images, deploy and reimage PCs, and support users
- A positive return on investment in less than six months

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Wunderman, a global network of advertising and marketing companies, wanted to boost user productivity and reduce the time spent maintaining operating system images. The company decided to standardize on Windows 7 Professional and began by using the Microsoft Assessment and Planning (MAP) Toolkit to assess its PC infrastructure. Wunderman also participated in an Application Compatibility Factory engagement to test and remediate application compatibility, and is using the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit to optimize image management and deployment. Improvements in navigation, PC performance, desktop search, battery life, and connectivity are making users more productive, and the company is seeing significant reductions in IT effort and the number of help-desk calls.



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## Situation

Wunderman is a global network of specialized advertising and marketing companies, with more than 130 offices in 55 countries. Lester Wunderman, the company’s founder, is widely considered to be the creator of response-driven marketing, a global industry whose worth is estimated at a trillion dollars. Headquartered in New York City, Wunderman is part of Young & Rubicam Brands and a member of WPP Group.

Wunderman’s employees carry out the company’s business using approximately 3,000 desktop and portable computers that run the Windows operating system. As of 2009, some 60 percent of those computers ran Windows XP. The remainder ran the Windows Vista operating system, which had been adopted across the organization ad hoc as new PCs were ordered or people needed features in the later operating system.

For the IT teams supporting each Wunderman company, the presence of two operating systems meant more work, particularly in the area of image management. “We had to maintain two images for each make and model of PC, resulting in more than 30 images and 600 gigabytes of image data to support our New York City office alone,” says Opher Lichter, IT Director at Wunderman. “As software updates and new drivers came out, we would have to reconfigure a lab PC and recapture the image. Even with a person dedicated to the task full-time, we still couldn’t keep up.”

The company’s PC environment presented other opportunities for time savings, as well. In the New York office, which has about 400 PCs, the company deploys approximately 150 new PCs each year and reimages an additional 100 to fix problems. In either case, after technicians applied an image, they had to spend a good deal of

additional time installing applications, software updates, and drivers, bringing the total time required to deploy or reimagine a single PC to about four hours.

By mid-2009, Wunderman decided that the time had come to reduce the aforementioned inefficiencies and standardize on a single operating system. “We set out to optimize operating system and application deployment; system management; and the associated processes, tools, and policies,” says Lichter. “What’s more, to make things go smoothly, we knew that we had to test and remediate any issues with applications and drivers early in the process. Of course, we also saw the project as an opportunity to deliver improvements in areas that could make a real difference to end users—such as ease of use, stability, performance, and so on.”

## Solution

Wunderman is standardizing on Windows 7 Professional (including the Windows Internet Explorer 8 browser), having realized that many of the new and improved features in the latest version of Windows will boost user productivity. Before embarking on the deployment of the upgrade, the company used the Microsoft Assessment and Planning Toolkit to gain an accurate assessment of its PC infrastructure and participated in an Application Compatibility Factory engagement to test and remediate application compatibility. Currently, Wunderman is using the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit to optimize image management and deployment. Wunderman has already migrated close to 30 percent of its PCs to Windows 7.

## Initial Evaluation

Wunderman began evaluating Windows 7 in mid-2009, after the regional technology directors agreed that the company would eventually move to the operating system—

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and that it made sense to get started as soon as possible. The IT department in the company's New York office evaluated Windows 7 and then began pilot-testing the release candidate of the operating system on its own PCs.

“Windows 7 ran well on lots of different hardware, including older PCs, delivering impressive results in the areas of performance, multitasking, and memory use,” says Lichter. “We also found many features that would improve the end-user experience, such as Peek, Jump Lists, Windows Taskbar previews, enhancements to Windows Search, improved support for external displays, and improvements to User Account Control. Within a few weeks after we began evaluating Windows 7, it became readily apparent that we had to get it into the hands of end users as soon as possible.”

#### **Assessment, Planning, and Application Compatibility Testing**

During the pilot test, Wunderman used the Microsoft Assessment and Planning (MAP) Toolkit to gain an accurate assessment of its PC infrastructure. “With the MAP Toolkit, we were able to inventory existing PCs to get a quick overview of our PC environment—including identification of PCs that were likely to have problems running Windows 7,” says Lichter. “We've used that data to remediate potential issues prior to upgrading those systems, such as by adding more memory.”

The company also participated in an Application Compatibility Factory engagement, during which Microsoft Gold Certified Partner CDW helped Wunderman use the Microsoft Application Compatibility Toolkit to catalog its applications. Upon first reviewing that catalog, Wunderman was overwhelmed by the sheer number of applications. However, Wunderman soon

realized that the results included several different versions of certain applications, and that it needed to support only the latest version of each.

“Of approximately 150 off-the-shelf and internally developed applications, 20 presented some sort of compatibility issue, and 18 of those issues were remediated by the end of the week,” says Lichter. “The Application Compatibility Factory engagement enabled us to do in a week what would otherwise have stretched out over months. CDW brought proven methodologies for remediation, helped remediate more difficult issues, and taught us how to move forward on our own. The Application Compatibility Toolkit was helpful and easy to use; we'll definitely continue using it.”

#### **Broad Deployment**

Wunderman initiated a second, broader pilot upon obtaining the release-to-manufacturing version of Windows 7. The pilot included users from across the company, as a means of making sure the operating system worked for different departments and seeding those departments with “power users” who could later help others. “The day after we obtained the release-to-manufacturing version, we deployed Windows 7 to approximately 30 PCs in New York and to additional PCs in other offices, gradually increasing the scope of deployment over the next eight weeks as we received more and more positive feedback,” says Jeff Marshall, Worldwide Chief Information Officer at Wunderman. “It wasn't long before people were calling to ask, ‘When can I get Windows 7, too?’”

By March 2010, the company's broad migration to Windows 7 was well under way. “Although each office is free to adopt Windows 7 at its own pace, several offices have already migrated more than half of

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their PCs to the operating system,” says Lichter. “Because of the time spent on application compatibility testing and remediation early in the process, we’ve run into relatively few issues, and Windows 7 has been very well received by users.”

Wunderman is supporting the deployment of Windows 7 by using the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit, which has enabled the company to transition from image-based deployment and reimaging to a much more efficient and streamlined process. Today, instead of maintaining more than 30 images, the New York office maintains a set of three operating system packages, 20 core applications, and a driver store—all on a centralized server. “Technicians simply walk up to a PC and select the desired profile, and all of the required software is installed over the network,” says Lichter. “We can even apply a clean installation of Windows 7 while retaining existing user files and settings on the PC’s hard disk. Within 20 to 30 minutes from the time a technician starts an installation of Windows 7, that PC is back up and running. In comparison, it took four hours to deploy Windows XP or Windows Vista.”

### Benefits

Standardization on Windows 7 is yielding strong benefits across the company. End users are more productive because of improvements in navigation and search, PC performance, battery life, and connectivity. The IT organization is benefiting from a significant decrease in the time spent managing images, deploying and reimaging PCs, and supporting end users. “We’ve already upgraded hundreds of desktops to Windows 7 and are continuing to deploy it as quickly as possible,” says Marshall.

#### Increased User Productivity

For end users, the company’s decision to deploy Windows 7 is helping to simplify

everyday tasks and ensure that their PCs work the way they want, with fewer problems and annoyances. Some key benefits that users are realizing include:

- **Improved navigation.** The company’s move to Windows 7 has made navigation faster and easier in many ways. Users can pin programs to the Windows Taskbar for faster access, and the live thumbnail previews on the Windows Taskbar help them quickly find the window they want. Jump Lists on the Windows Taskbar and Start menu provide fast and easy access to recently used files. Desktop enhancements such as Peek, Shake, and Snap enable the use of intuitive mouse gestures to make all windows transparent, minimize all windows but one, or compare the contents of two windows side by side.
- **Better performance.** PCs that were running Windows Vista are more responsive after being upgraded because of the improved memory use and search and indexing optimizations in Windows 7, as well as how the newer operating system now starts many background services only when needed instead of automatically at startup. Users also are seeing improvements in the speed with which their PCs start, shut down, and resume from sleep state. “In the past, laptop users were loathe to restart their PCs,” says Lichter. “With Windows 7, shutting down and restarting is no longer an issue. We’ve had very few complaints about the performance of Windows 7, even on older PCs. In fact, many users say their PCs are faster after being upgraded from Windows XP to Windows 7.”
- **Enhanced Windows Search.** Search indexing is also faster, and search results are more relevant, which means that

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users can more easily find what they need. “Desktop search is another area where Windows 7 outperforms Windows XP, on which many people disabled search indexing due to poor performance,” says Lichter. “The search capabilities in Windows 7 turn normal users into power users by helping them to more easily find information. We’re looking at Federated Search in Windows 7 as a means of extending desktop search to network resources and are now testing that functionality with our file servers.”

- **Longer battery life.** The way that Windows 7 improves battery life is also proving beneficial, especially for those employees who travel frequently. “Windows 7 significantly improves battery life,” says Lichter. “I’ve heard from several people that they can get more work done on a single battery charge. We have one laptop model that runs for eight hours on a single charge; no laptop running an earlier version of Windows came close to that.”
- **Easier connectivity.** Because of the VPN Reconnect feature in Windows 7, users no longer have to manually reconnect when a virtual private network (VPN) connection is dropped. Improved support for mobile broadband, wireless networks, and offline files also are proving useful. “More people are using offline files because they can enable it with just a few mouse clicks—and it just works,” says Lichter. “Similarly, it takes fewer clicks to get connected over wireless or mobile broadband. People are telling us that Windows 7 enables them to get connected and stay connected far more easily. One person told me that the connectivity features on his new laptop were really making a

difference, when in fact it was the same system, only upgraded to Windows 7.”

#### Reduced IT Workload

For the IT departments supporting the different Wunderman offices, the company’s move to Windows 7 is streamlining image management, deployment, and reimaging; improving security; and reducing the number of help-desk calls. “Our move to Windows 7 will reduce annual IT labor by more than 1,200 hours—a conservative estimate—and that’s for our New York office alone,” says Lichter. “We’re sharing all of our findings with the IT departments that support other offices to help them realize similar time savings.”

Ways in which the New York office has reduced IT effort include:

- **Reduced image management.** Prior to deploying Windows 7, the New York office maintained more than 30 hardware-specific images, each of which was serviced approximately once per quarter. Today, the IT department uses the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit to support three core operating system packages, 20 core applications, and a driver store, with configuration files determining which software is deployed. “Moving to Windows 7 and taking advantage of the Microsoft Deployment Toolkit will reduce our image management workload by at least 360 hours per year,” says Lichter. “We’re saving additional IT effort through the work we’ve done to inventory our software and build a rationalized list of supported applications.”
- **Faster deployment.** In 2009, the New York office deployed approximately 150 new PCs, each requiring about 4 hours of technician effort. Today, a PC can be deployed—or reimaged—in about 30

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minutes. "Deployment and reimaging times were reduced by more than 80 percent," says Lichter. "Assuming a 3-hour savings per PC, that's 450 hours that we're saving annually."

- **Fewer reimages.** In 2009, the New York office reimaged approximately 100 PCs. Over the past six months, of the PCs running Windows 7, only a few have needed to be reimaged. "Windows 7 is more reliable, secure, and hassle-free than previous versions," says Lichter. "From what we've seen, it will virtually eliminate the need to reimage PCs, resulting in a time savings of 400 technician hours per year."
- **Fewer help-desk calls.** The number of help-desk calls is dropping as Wunderman continues to roll out Windows 7. "We used to receive lots of calls from users having trouble with tasks such as connecting to an external projector," says Lichter. "Windows 7 greatly simplifies that process and many other common tasks, resulting in fewer help-desk calls. Even with the new deployment of an operating system, help-desk calls are already down 10 to 15 percent. And when users do have issues, Windows 7 features such as Startup Repair and the Problem Steps Recorder are reducing the time it takes to address the problem."
- **Enhanced security.** User Account Control in Windows 7 is making a big difference with respect to IT security at Wunderman, especially for users who are transitioning from Windows XP. "We allow users to run with administrative privileges, so we're not using User Account Control to lock down PCs," explains Lichter. "Rather, the way that User Account Control prompts users when they try to do something that's

potentially dangerous serves as a 'sanity check,' enabling them to stop and think first. Windows Internet Explorer 8 features such as the SmartScreen Filter and Data Execution Prevention are also improving security and are another reason why the number of help-desk calls and system reimages is down."

#### **Positive Return on Investment in Six Months**

Overall, Wunderman is pleased with the results of its Windows 7 deployment. "In less than six months, we've seen a positive return on investment," says Marshall. "The benefits in terms of IT and end-user productivity are in addition to the other, less tangible benefits—such as a lower risk of security incidents and a reduced risk of unlicensed or improperly licensed software because of the work done to catalog our applications. Our adoption of Windows 7 was clearly worth the effort, and the operating system is generating a very positive interest among users."

## For More Information

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For more information about CDW, visit the Web site at:

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## Windows 7

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### Software and Services

- Windows 7 Professional
- Services
  - Application Compatibility Factory Program
- Technologies
  - Microsoft Application Compatibility Toolkit
  - Microsoft Assessment and Planning Toolkit
  - Microsoft Deployment Toolkit
  - Windows Internet Explorer 8

### Partners

- CDW