RES FOR ENERGY AND UTILITY PROVIDERS

Optimizing Energy and Utility Companies through Proactive IT with RES

Energy and utility companies are in a constant battle to invest in the market strategically while keeping costs low and meeting regulatory mandates. New investments are being made to support an ever increasing mobile workforce, updating core infrastructure, investing in alternative energy sources and focusing on delivering high quality, reliable services to customers.

While an exciting time for growth and innovation, many companies struggle to keep up with the dynamics of the business while operating in a highly regulated industry that is often a target of malicious external threats. IT is often caught in the cross-roads of helping introduce new technologies and adhering to the necessary security policies and restricting outside network access.

RES helps IT restore the strained relationships that often exist across organizations by enabling IT departments to become a strategic broker of critical business technology. RES focuses on making IT people-centric, service oriented and predictive. This approach enables the right balance of flexibility for users and control for IT.

SUPPORTING A HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE, MOBILE AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Energy and utility companies are under increasing pressure to support an expanding workforce significantly made up of contractors and field employees. According to a recent report from Navigant Research, the global utility mobile workforce will grow from about 1.2 million employees in 2013 to more than 2.4 million by 2020. In order to support these workers, IT organizations need a strategy to quickly deliver services and applications to the field when they are needed, and based on the context of the employee (factors such as time of day, location, end point device, connectivity method and more). With this approach, the are no more challenges of field technicians loosing valuable service time by forced software updates on lower bandwidth networks; IT has more control on when, where and how they can receive these. With increased use of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) strategies, there is also a need for rapid restoration and creation of a user's workspace. As employees use their devices they need rapid access to the applications and full restoration of their workspace with all their personal preferences – without disruption to their daily work.

RES helps address these challenges by creating a single management layer for centralized desktop management and associated configurations. We enable user profiles to be applied in real-time per application, resulting in reduced login times, rapid profile restoration, and a more seamless user experience.

Not only can RES create a dynamic workspace, but RES can deliver that workspace in the context of the employee. For example, if a field worker is using public Wi-Fi access, they can be limited in their access to highly sensitive information.

REDUCING THREAT OF EXPOSURE TO MALWARE

Energy and utility companies are unique in that they are a key target for certain cyber-attacks (i.e. Stuxnet, Duqu, Flame, and of course everyone remembers Shamoon having infected over 30,000 workstations). Unlike many other industries where technology hackers remain hidden in order to steal sensitive information (credit card numbers, bank records, etc), energy and utility organizations are key targets for more malicious intent. The intent is to take down an entire local area's power supply and threaten the day-to-day life of many.

RES minimizes the risk of new malware by supporting comprehensive whitelisting in the context of the user. RES goes beyond creating a traditional whitelist of approved applications and services by identifying the list based on the user's current context – location, device, Wi-Fi connection, or role. Outside risk can also be reduced with the ability to lock down external devices by vendor ID or serial number. IT can allow, deny or permit limit access based on the user context and device.

RES also supports enterprise and utility companies in their business continuity and disaster recovery efforts. Should a machine be infected by malware or another disaster take place, user profiles and preferences can easily be recovered and delivered to a new device reducing the 'time to restore' for IT and minimizing distraction to the overall business operation. Ultimately, this allows organizations to provide the best service possible to customers.

STREAMLINING IT PROCESSES AND ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Within many energy and utility companies, pressure exists to keep operating costs low in order to deliver high quality services at the lowest cost for customers. This pressure significantly impacts IT organizations that are constantly looking for ways to do more with less.

RES helps streamline IT processes and frees up team members for more strategic projects by automating the activation and deactivation of IT services based on contextual triggers. This not only helps give users access to the applications they need when they need them, but reduces security threats by removing access to sensitive applications when employees leave or are assigned new roles within the company. This becomes even more critical in an environment that has a transient workforce like that in energy and utilities.

Equally important in helping a diverse workforce is the ability to dynamically elevate or restrict system administrative privileges to an application, installation, or control panel by applying principles of least privileges. This provides enough flexibility for users, without giving them local administrator rights and opening up greater vulnerabilities.

PROVIDING SECURE FLEXIBILITY TO THE BUSINESS AND USERS

Across all industries, a greater movement toward the consumerizaiton of IT is taking place, giving users greater flexibility on how they use and leverage applications and data. The challenge for IT is to enable this rapid access while still maintaining a level of control for security and compliance purposes.

RES not only automates how these services are delivered for fast, responsive consumerization but also offers a rich user interface (a self-service IT storefront) where employees can request services and applications available to them based on their role, projects, or other important qualifications. Employees and contractors can request access to new applications or perform common service requests that can prevent service desk tickets, such as password resets. Automation helps IT streamline the request process. Self-service not only makes employees more productive (especially out in the field) but frees up IT for more strategic projects.

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ABOUT RES

RES creates, automates and secures digital workspaces to improve the experience and productivity of the workforce while lowering IT costs. RES takes a people-centric approach to making technology access secure, even in complex multi-device/multi-location scenarios, across physical, virtual and cloud environments. RES boasts numerous patented technologies, fast time to value, and superior customer support for more than 2,500 companies around the world. For more information, visit www.res.com, contact your preferred RES partner, or follow updates on Twitter @ressoftware.

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