



Shiseido Singapore Greatly Improves Software and Asset Management Using Hitachi JP1

Customer Profile

Shiseido Singapore is a wholly owned subsidiary of cosmetics and beauty care giant Shiseido, which reported almost ¥640 billion in net sales for the year ended March 31, 2005.

Industry

Consumer Products –
Cosmetics and beauty care

Business Challenge

Before Shiseido Singapore implemented Hitachi JP1, software distribution and IT asset management tasks were performed manually. The administrative and time burden on the IT function was heavy, end-user support was laborious, and there was little control over the client environment.

Solution

Hitachi JP1 Software Distribution and Asset Information Manager

Benefits

- Automated distribution of software
- Improved license and maintenance management
- Remote end-user support
- Swift problem diagnosis and resolution
- More productive IT and end-user staff
- Visibility of IT assets
- Better allocation of IT assets

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Tatsuya Nagai, Managing Director

Shiseido Singapore Co. (Pte) Ltd. distributes and retails beauty care products of four brands as part of its parent’s Global Multi-Brand Strategy. The strategy is executed at more than 20 Shiseido counters in popular shopping malls. PCs at the counters run a POS application and connect to the head-office server via dial-up links. Back-end operations are supported by standalone applications that run on the head-office server and another server at a warehouse.

Each of the 60-plus PC clients is provisioned with software matched to the particular user’s job function. License management, version control and patches are synchronized and up to date, end-user issues are resolved remotely, and the IT function has a clear view of each PC’s configuration – thanks to the Software Distribution and Asset Information Manager components of Hitachi Job Management Partner 1 (Hitachi JP1).

This effective and efficient desktop management situation is a far cry from what Shiseido Singapore had before it started using the Hitachi solutions in late 2005.

Uncontrolled Client Environment

“Our client environment was largely uncontrolled. Every new PC had more or less the same set of client software regardless of the intended user’s needs,” said Terumi Kamata, Finance & Administration Manager. “Software versions depended on when the PCs were procured, and there was no visibility of software downloaded from the Web. Information on licenses, configuration, related IT assets, maintenance agreements and so on were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet.”

Software updating and patching were carried out manually machine by machine. A typical update or patch took Shiseido Singapore’s lone IT resource person, IT & Systems Executive Angie Ng, two days to complete.



Troubleshooting remote PC clients and the warehouse server was also a challenge. Often, end-user operations had to be interrupted and site visits made, especially to the warehouse.

In mid-2005, recognizing that automation was required in the distribution of software and management of IT assets, Shiseido Singapore started to source for suitable solutions and was introduced to Hitachi JP1 at a seminar organized by Hitachi in August 2005.

Expectations

“What we were looking for were: centralized control of a tidier client environment, deep knowledge of our IT assets, an end to manual updates and patches, zero or little downtime or interruption to operations, faster response to end-user issues, and a lower burden on the IT function. Together, JP1 Software Distribution and Asset Information Manager met these expectations,” said Ms. Kamata.

What the company found particularly attractive were the enablement of a lifecycle approach to asset management, the Remote Control function for remote handling of issues on clients and servers, pro-active tracking of license and maintenance agreements, and the ability to schedule updates and patches.

Benefits


Now, with JP1 Software Distribution in place, new applications, patches and updates are distributed much faster than before. The actual transfer is transparent to end-users and there is no interruption of day-to-day operations.

In the asset management area, Shiseido Singapore now has IT asset listings that require minimal effort to update, and server and client PC configurations can be viewed using a Web browser. Such visibility has enabled it to better allocate assets, control Web downloads, avoid overbuying, and even secure better

terms for software and maintenance agreements. More significantly, both solutions have enabled Ms. Ng to respond swiftly to client PC and warehouse server problems, the vast majority of which are now diagnosed and resolved remotely.

“Previously, problems with the warehouse server could take up to an hour to diagnose from the time the warehouse manager raised the alert. Now, with all the necessary information readily at hand, the duration has been slashed to a mere five minutes,” said Ms. Ng, who now has more time to spend on planning how else Shiseido Singapore can additionally leverage IT for business benefit.

Hitachi as Partner

“We view Hitachi more as a very close business partner for the long term than a mere technology supplier. In the short time that we’ve worked together thus far, it has proven itself many times over, always willing to offer sound expert advice on how we can better leverage IT,” said Managing Director  Tatsuya Nagai. “In fact, we’ve worked on various initiatives on a company to company basis and I’m confident the relationship will flourish as we move forward as partners.”

Mr. Nagai also sees the potential for Hitachi JP1 to be widely adopted by the beauty care giant over time. Shiseido Singapore, as the pioneer user of the Hitachi solutions within the group, would gladly share its experience with its sister country offices, he added.

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