



"There's no other software that we've seen that incorporates taking inventory, imaging, managing, updating, and the functionality to do pushes and pulls like the Casper Suite. It's the Holy Grail of maintenance for the Macintosh environment."

-Tim Schultz

Merrill Corporation

St. Paul, MN

Casper Suite Case Study: September 2006

Global challenges

Since its start in 1968, Merrill Corporation, based in St. Paul, Minnesota, has steadily grown to over 5,600 employees with offices and affiliates worldwide. Merrill is a leading provider of outsourcing solutions for various complex business communication and information management needs. Merrill's services include document and data management, litigation support, branded communication programs, fulfillment, imaging, and printing.

Merrill's Macintosh users are located throughout fifteen locations worldwide, and as William Smith, Merrill's Technical Support Analyst, describes, "It's the most challenging environment I've ever had to support."

Global control

"We have a small number of people managing nearly all of our Macs worldwide—global control is critical," says Tim Schultz, Merrill's IT Manager. William jumps in, "Support is also only one of our responsibilities. We also work on workflow management, scripting, and development." Tim adds, "Casper is saving us right now. It's an all-in-one tool that lets us maintain our environment so we can focus on those other priorities."

Merrill relies heavily on the Casper Suite's Policy functionality. As William puts it, "Dealing with customized software and workstations within a corporation of our size can be maddening. There's no way we could get by without Casper." He continues, "I love Casper's Policy features. It lets my users decide when they want to receive updates because they're triggered by log offs and log ons. I don't have to interrupt anyone's work, I don't have to be on site to roll them out, and I receive a complete activity log."

Tim adds, "William supports users with 20 different applications—plus their plugins—with updates potentially happening two or three times a week. Casper makes this a lot easier." William describes his process, "As soon as I have an update ready, I'll broadcast a message using Casper to the

Situation

Needs:

- Ability to do builds with a standard base
- Ability to manage diverse customization & configurations
- Global control

Environment:

- Multiple locations worldwide
- 350 Macintosh computers
- Active Directory

JAMF
software 

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appropriate users and then they trigger the pull whenever they're ready by logging off and on." This approach lets Merrill do their updating during regular shifts so analysts and managers like William and Tim get to have more of a life.

Push and pull

Merrill's Macintosh environment is a complex mix of standard builds and intense customization. Some of their machines could even be described as 'Frankensteins' due to complex configurations. The Casper Suite's push and pull capability combined with Policies gives support personnel at Merrill tremendous flexibility. William comments, "Casper allows us to push out updates when necessary while also allowing us to set up Policies to create forced pulls. Users determine when to receive updated preferences, fixes, or other modifications." Merrill strategically deploys pushes and pulls for greater efficiency and easier maintenance.

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