

Company Profile: For more than 67 years, Beltone New England has been the most trusted name in hearing aids, providing dependable care and quality services to the hearing impaired across the Northeast.

Website: www.beltonene.com

Business Challenge: As a company dedicated to superior customer service, Beltone New England's hearing care practitioners and audiologists are required to record customer and sale information in the company's point of sale application immediately after matching a client with one of its industry-leading hearing aid devices. If a transaction can not be recorded, the customer could be inconvenienced and a sale potentially lost. Given this importance placed on availability, it is vital that the company's IT staff ensures the health and performance of distributed systems for the mobile workforce.

Solution: Beltone New England deployed a remote and automatic IT management solution from Kaseya, giving its administrators a single platform in which to identify, prioritize, track, resolve and report help desk issues. By integrating ticketing and help desk with proactive monitoring and maintenance, the IT staff can cost- and time- efficiently manage a growing distributed network spread over 50 offices in seven states while keeping employees armed with the tools and information they need to record sales and provide superior service to customers.



Kaseya Help Desk Solution Centralizes IT Support and Maintenance, Ensuring Issues are Resolved Quickly and Accurately

Beltone New England has been the most trusted name in hearing aids throughout the Northeast U.S., working with the hearing impaired for more than 67 years. Its 100-person sales force of health care practitioners and audiologists work out of 50 branch offices throughout New England and New York, helping to match prospective customers with the company's leading hearing aid devices.

Relying on superior customer service, the company requires its representatives to record all sales in Beltone's point of sale application that was developed by its parent company, giving customers the peace of mind that their transactions are complete and accurate without having to receive a bill in the mail or fill out additional paperwork at a later date. In addition, the application is Web-based, making sure that as long as the salesman has access to the Internet, he can finalize the transaction and record the sale immediately.

"Ensuring availability of the point of sale application is absolutely central to IT support," said Mayur Kirtani, Director of IT, Beltone New England. "And ensuring that availability means we need to maintain not only the application and the server it runs on but make sure employees' systems are up to date, running optimally and can access the Internet."

Given this reliance on systems health, Kirtani and his assistant spent the majority of their time fielding calls and reading emails from salesmen out in the field who were having issues accessing the point of sale application. People would also stop him in the hall or leave Post-It notes on his desk. The lack of a centralized repository of information caused repetitive issues to recur, forcing him to utilize stop-gap solutions instead of analyzing repetitive issues and come up with a long-term, permanent solution. In addition, most of the end users are not computer literate, so he'd have to spend at least ten to 15 minutes asking questions about the computer's basic information and current status. He'd then have to remember to record the issue, a task that often got lost throughout the day.

"We just couldn't keep up with all the requests coming in from multiple offices through varying media," he said. "I knew that we needed a central help desk solution that could help us prioritize and track the issues so we could efficiently resolve them according to their mission-importance."

Central Help Desk from Kaseya

Beltone New England deployed a remote and automatic IT management solution from Kaseya, giving Kirtani and his assistant a single platform in which to identify, prioritize, track, resolve and report help desk issues. The Kaseya solution integrates help desk and ticketing with systems maintenance, monitoring and remote access, allowing the company to quickly prioritize and get to the bottom of issues reported by a distributed and mobile workforce. In addition, Kaseya ties help desk and ticketing to a central repository of information and analytics, providing critical information like operating system version, memory, RAM and configuration logs on each workstation as issues are being resolved.

“All the information we need to quickly resolve issues is right there in a single, consolidated management platform,” Kirtani said. “I can organize tickets more efficiently, prioritize the most pressing issues and assign a unique ID to each one so I always know the status. As a result, we’re more efficient with our time, and issues—regardless if they are down the hall or 300 miles away—are being resolved much faster and with a much higher degree of accuracy.”

In addition, end users can track their tickets, giving them the peace of mind that their concerns are being addressed and progress is being made.

Kaseya’s low-footprint agent is deployed on 150 workstations and two virtualized servers running the organization’s mail, security and BlackBerry® systems. The software allows Beltone New England to proactively monitor, patch, secure and back up each system from a consolidated management console, helping to streamline basic administration and ensure consistency throughout the environment—both proactive components to reducing help desk issues and heading off concerns before they lead to availability or performance problems down the road.

For example, if Kirtani used Kaseya to analyze tickets and found out that Windows XP systems weren’t performing well, he could choose to standardize the systems to run Microsoft Vista. He could then use Kaseya’s automatic auditing capabilities to identify out-dated systems and check to make sure they have the required specs for memory and hard drive space. He could then write a script through Kaseya’s scripting engine to automatically push out and install the new operating system. He would be able to update the distributed systems remotely from Beltone New England’s Rhode Island headquarters without having to travel to each of the company’s 50 offices.

Kaseya Help Desk Ensures Applications Availability, Business Continuity

The ability to prioritize and track tickets from a single management platform ensures that help desk issues are resolved more quickly and more accurately, giving a distributed and mobile workforce reliable access to the company’s Web-based point of sale application. This availability allows the company’s health care practitioners and audiologists to complete sales transactions immediately after matching a customer with a hearing aid device, enhancing customer service and ensuring transactions are reported.

“The Kaseya help desk ensures that employees have a reliable and central method to report issues they have with their systems or our business applications. As a result, we have less downtime and our workforce can focus their efforts on making sales rather than twiddling with their computers,” Kirtani said.

According to an audit conducted by Beltone New England, one hour of downtime can cost the company \$3,000 per hour per office in lost sales or late-filed transactions. With 50 offices scattered across the Northeast, application availability is directly tied to whether the company meets or exceeds its revenue goals. Now that the average issue is resolved in several minutes as opposed to up to 45 minutes previously—or issues are eliminated before they can affect availability—the IT staff is able to ensure business continuity and enable a financially-healthy organization.

Key Benefits

- Ensures uptime for point of sale application; company estimates that each hour of downtime costs the company \$3,000 for each of the 50 offices
- Improves customer service, enabling specialists to complete sales transactions in person at the time of sale without additional paperwork
- Ease of filing tickets and tracking their progress has restored employees’ faith in the IT staff, trusting that issues will be resolved quickly and accurately
- Central help desk helps prioritize IT tasks and goals, making sure the most pressing issues are resolved quickly
- Basic maintenance is automated, eliminating repetitive tasks and saving the IT staff 40 hours per month

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The proactive IT management strategy also saves up to 40 hours per month for Kirtani and his assistant, streamlining basic maintenance and eliminating repetitive administrative tasks. Things like deploying an update to a sales application used to take several days and required Kirtani to ship a CD to all 50 offices and ask someone—usually an employee not trained by the IT staff—to walk around and install the new software. Now, Kirtani can install the update locally in the background as people continue to work, then use a Kaseya script to push a new software image out to all the systems in the network, remotely updating each system at the touch of button. The IT staff can then use this new-found time to work on innovative technology solutions that help the business rather than spend most of their time on basic support or maintenance.

Over the next year, the IT departments of Beltone New England’s sister companies—Beltone New York, Beltone Carolina and Beltone Florida—will be rolled into one, making a consistent, central help desk vital to successfully scaling IT support. Through the capabilities inherent in the Kaseya solution, Kirtani will be called upon to replicate his success over a more distributed network—ensuring that a larger employee base has access to the tools and information they need to close deals and complete transactions.

About Kaseya

Kaseya is a global provider of IT automation software for IT Solution Providers and Public and Private Sector IT organizations. Kaseya’s IT Automation Framework allows IT Professionals to proactively monitor, manage and maintain distributed IT infrastructure remotely, easily and efficiently with one integrated Web based platform. Kaseya’s technology is licensed on over three million machines worldwide.

For a free 30 day trial visit www.kaseya.com/download

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