



UnumProvident Saves Money, Pleases Users, and Reduces its Technical Support Burden by Choosing Diskeeper® in Proactive Program to Maintain Hard-Disk Health

THE COMPANY

With assets exceeding \$45 billion, UnumProvident Corporation is a leading provider of disability insurance in the United States and United Kingdom. The company serves the needs of millions more through its innovative disability income protection insurance programs.

Based in Chattanooga, Tennessee, UnumProvident also has primary operations in Portland, Maine; Worcester, Massachusetts; and Glendale, California.

By offering personalized insurance solutions, the UnumProvident family of companies helps individuals and families balance their work and personal lives, protect their income and assets from the financial ravages of injury or illness, and assists them in returning to work after an absence.

An active philanthropic giver, UnumProvident has been recognized repeatedly as one of America's most admired companies by Fortune magazine, and tops the publication's list of most-admired life and health insurance companies.

THE CHALLENGE

Like many successful multinational enterprise corporations, UnumProvident deploys thousands of desktop and laptop computers to its employees around the world. As the company's business evolved and with the passage of time, a gradual, but steady erosion in the performance of these systems occurred. Transaction and forms-intensive applications, such as insurance sales and account servicing, placed additional demands on individual employees' systems. And as the company's business operations expanded, adding hundreds of additional computers, so too did the challenge of maintaining the health of these systems.

As these desktop and laptop systems aged, users increasingly turned to UnumProvident's world-class technical support group for help. Calls grew in number and frequency, placing a mounting burden on the staff and its resources. An analysis of these calls revealed that very few systems experienced an outright hardware breakdown. Rather, a significant number of calls were related to computers whose response and performance had simply deteriorated over time. As users edited existing documents, deleted those no longer needed, and created thousands of new ones, system performance suffered, taking ever longer to save and retrieve files.

Further investigation identified the culprit: file fragmentation. The hard drives on these thousands of systems, though modest in storage capacity compared with new computers, had never been defragmented, reorganizing their contents so that each file occupied a contiguous area instead of being stored as many small chunks.

Regardless of a company's size, from multinational enterprise to sole proprietorship, studies show that computer users are rarely familiar with disk fragmentation, what it is, how it occurs, and the hazards associated with it. Similarly, many who understand disk fragmentation do not want to be burdened with the chore of performing routine hard disk maintenance, a counterproductive task that robs valuable time away from their jobs.

Concluding that most its 13,000 computers were fully depreciated, past their useful lifespan, and obsolete, UnumProvident embarked on an ambitious three-year plan to replace them all, devising a rolling schedule for future replacements and simultaneously implementing a strategy to ensure that performance remains high as systems age and their hard drives grow full.

THE SOLUTION

Led by Blake Pease, UnumProvident's senior systems manager of desktops and peripherals, and Sharon Sawrie as the Project Leader, the company assembled a 15-person project team to develop a strategy for replacing all systems. The team's first order of business was to scrutinize the past in order to plan for the future. They required a solution that would extend the useful life of new systems, minimize support requirements, and simplify future upgrades. And it all needed to be done without intervention by individual users.

Choosing from a variety of available software products, the team selected Diskeeper from Executive Software as its solution for maintaining the hard-disk health of all new desktop and laptop computers.

"As we replaced our hardware, we wanted to have the disk defragmentation process occur without user involvement – and without users even knowing it was happening," says Pease. "Our associates are experts in providing disability insurance to millions of people around the world; their focus shouldn't be on maintenance of their computers. Diskeeper ensures that no local support is needed and that all file operations are as fast as the hardware allows."

Each new desktop or laptop computer is tailored to meet the business needs of its individual intended user. Installed on every system is a common "enterprise layer," including standard office-productivity applications, virtual private network communications, and Executive Software's Diskeeper. Specialized applications, chosen from UnumProvident's library of more than 600 and matched to the employee's specific role, are also installed.

Diskeeper is configured to automatically run once a week on each system. It does so in the background, completely invisible to the

computer's user. The result is systems that maintain their high performance levels, no longer slowing down with the passage of time.

THE BENEFITS

Now in the second year of its corporatewide PC replacement program, UnumProvident is already seeing a difference. Calls to the company's technical support group have abated, cutting costs. Complaints about system performance have disappeared, reducing employee stress. User satisfaction and service levels have both increased dramatically. And a field analysis of selected systems reveals that hard-disk fragmentation now averages less than four percent, far less than the 50-percent levels common on the thousands of systems without Diskeeper.

With a corporatewide plan to replace systems every three years, the success of Diskeeper is allowing UnumProvident to stretch that cycle by an additional six months. "Getting those extra months from our 13,000 systems is a benefit worth millions of dollars," says Pease.

While UnumProvident safeguards the incomes of millions of people worldwide, Diskeeper is safeguarding the company's operations and saving money in the process.



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