



## Microsoft Windows XP Professional Customer Solution

# Windows XP Professional and Office XP Professional Help Insurance Provider to Enhance Service and Reduce Costs

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***With an enterprisewide deployment of Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional and Office XP Professional, Kemper Insurance, a leading provider of property-casualty insurance and risk management services, will control operating costs while providing first-rate service to users. The deployment also will help the company to save nearly U.S.\$700,000 yearly in the costs of application support and laptop purchase and maintenance. Moreover, a concurrent deployment of the Windows 2000 Server operating system at the server level will help the company to reduce its remote server machines by half.***

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## Situation

Founded in 1912 to provide compensation insurance for Chicago's lumberyard workers, Kemper Insurance has become a leading provider of property-casualty insurance and risk management services. Today, the U.S.\$5.9 billion company serves nearly 400 national accounts through more than 3,500 independent agents and brokers and employs 8,300 at locations throughout North America and beyond. Being part of a data and document-heavy industry, the vast majority of employees at Kemper are knowledge workers who rely extensively on highly automated systems and processes. For this, the company maintains roughly 8,500 PCs—two-thirds of them desktops and one-third of them laptops—at headquarters outside Chicago and 87 remote locations.

Starting in 1996, these PCs ran the Microsoft® Windows NT® Workstation operating system version 4.0 and the Microsoft Office 97 desktop productivity suite, technologies that served the business well, says Mike Gibbs, E-Commerce and LAN Infrastructure Services Director. However, seeking the performance advantages of newer technology, Gibbs and his colleagues decided in 2001 it was time for an upgrade. So they began work on a project that would migrate users to the Microsoft Windows® XP Professional operating system and Office XP Professional, deploy the Microsoft Windows 2000 Server operating system and Active Directory® service to a selected number of the company's servers, and upgrade desktop and laptop hardware as well.



## Solution Overview

### **Customer Profile**

A leading provider of property-casualty insurance and risk management services, 400 national accounts, 2001 revenues of U.S.\$5.9 billion, and 8,300 employees

### **Business Situation**

Seeking the performance advantages of an enterprisewide upgrade

### **Solution**

Deployment of Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional and Office XP Professional on 8,500 client PCs and Windows 2000 Server on hundreds of servers

### **Benefits**

- Savings of \$30,000 yearly in application-support costs
- Savings of \$360,000 in third-party remote-assistance software
- Savings of \$650,000 yearly in laptop purchase and maintenance
- Easier deployment for staff and easier transition for users
- Significant server consolidation
- Centralized administration for controlling costs, enhancing service

### **Software and Services**

Microsoft Windows 2000 Server with Active Directory®  
Microsoft Windows XP Professional  
Microsoft Office XP Professional  
Microsoft Consulting Services

### **Hardware**

Hewlett-Packard/Compaq

### **Partner**

Intrinsic Technologies



Besides seeking a higher level of performance for users, Gibbs and other information technology (IT) executives wanted to further centralize administration of the client computing environment. Consequently, the integration of Windows XP with the Windows 2000 Active Directory service made that client operating system ideal. "We've maintained a centralized approach to administration for five years, but we're always seeking ways to strengthen that approach," Gibbs says. "So we really liked the support of Windows XP for the Windows 2000 Active Directory service."

Another Windows XP feature that appealed to Gibbs and his colleagues is the product's support for remote users through such features as Remote Desktop and Remote Assistance. "By its nature, the insurance business is highly distributed, with claims adjusters, loss-control engineers, and many other professionals frequently in transit," he says. "For this reason, we have long depended on being able to support our users remotely, and Windows XP looked to be a perfect way of doing that."

## **Solution**

Kemper launched its deployment of Microsoft Windows XP Professional and Office XP Professional through an enterprise upgrade agreement with Microsoft and with the help of technical staff from Microsoft Consulting Services (MCS), Intrinsic Technologies (a Chicago-area Microsoft Gold Certified Partner for Enterprise Systems), and Hewlett-Packard. Pilot installation began in June 2002, and four weeks later the team was deploying Windows XP and Office XP to about 50–70 PCs weekly, with plans to deploy hundreds per week once deployment was in full swing. MCS members are helping to set up the Active Directory service and assist with design and high-level architecture issues, while individuals from Intrinsic are automating the installation of the more than 600 applications used throughout the enterprise.

For Gibbs, one of the key reasons the deployment team is able to work so efficiently is the application compatibility provided by Windows XP. "About 80 percent of our applications are running without significant modification in the Windows XP environment," he says. "This lightens the deployment burden, enabling us to save an estimated \$30,000 yearly in IT support costs."

Concurrently, Kemper is migrating hundreds of Windows NT Server 4.0–based systems to the Windows 2000 Server operating system, beginning with those systems supporting the Active Directory service rollout. In the process, the company is managing to consolidate functionality on servers at remote locations such that their numbers can be halved—from about 400 servers down to about 200—by the time the migration is complete.

## **Benefits**

### **Easing the Transition into a New Environment**

Early on, the deployment team decided to take full advantage of one capability of Microsoft Windows XP Professional—specifically, the User State Migration Tool (USMT). According to Rick Dale, Vice President, Enterprise Production Services, USMT is helping the team to migrate user-specific data and settings transparently while ensuring that the settings do not conflict with the new operating-system environment. "We believe USMT will ultimately provide a great value to Kemper because of the company's widespread reliance on customized settings and processes," Dale says. "Technical staff will benefit from an easier deployment, and users will benefit from an easier transition to the new environment."

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Rick Dale  
Vice President, Enterprise  
Production Services  
Kemper Insurance

Once the deployment is complete, some time in the first half of 2003, Dale and his staff will make extensive use of the centralized administration and remote-support capabilities of Windows XP. According to Dale, Group Policy–based management, available through the support of Windows XP for Windows 2000 Active Directory service, will be critical for streamlining the company’s desktop management and maintenance. “Group Policy provides us quick and flexible configuration-management capabilities while helping us to maintain standardization,” he explains.

### **Supporting Remote Users While Saving on Laptops**

The remote-support capabilities of Windows XP Professional will be invaluable for the hundreds of users who frequently are on the road as well as the thousands of others who occasionally work from home or other locations, according to Gibbs. “With Remote Desktop, a user will be able to take control of his or her PC through a home-based system, for example, and access data and applications exactly as if he or she were in the office.”

As a consequence, Gibbs says, Kemper will be able to cut back on the number of laptops that it must purchase and maintain. “Many users had to have a desktop and a laptop even if they worked remotely only once in a while, and other users had laptops instead of desktops for the same reason,” he points out. “By enabling these users to do everything they need to do at the office with only a desktop machine—and to use their home PCs when they want to work from home—Remote Desktop will save us about \$650,000 yearly in purchase and maintenance costs.” Requiring fewer laptops will also make life easier for many Kemper users, Gibbs adds: “For the employees who would use their laptop only occasionally anyway, that’s one less thing they’ll have to carry between home and office.”

Remote Assistance is another capability of Windows XP that will benefit these users who work remotely, as well as those who do not. As Gibbs explains, Remote Assistance enables a help-desk professional to take remote control of a user’s desktop or laptop—wherever the user is located—and solve a problem while the user looks on or not, whichever is easier. “With Remote Assistance, users will be able to keep their systems up and running without having to coordinate a phone session with the help desk or wait for a replacement machine to be delivered,” he says. “Even at headquarters, where we have a full help-desk staff, Remote Assistance is convenient for staff members and users alike. But in the field offices, where we largely do not maintain onsite help-desk support, Remote Assistance is absolutely critical.”

Remote Assistance is good news for the Kemper bottom line, too, Gibbs points out. “By having a client operating system that includes this capability, we won’t have to provide it through a third-party product, which will save us about \$360,000.”

### **Ready for Future Advances**

Among the other benefits of the Windows XP deployment, according to Gibbs, are the system’s enhanced digital media capabilities. “The nature of the insurance business requires the long-term maintenance of millions of document images, which we are now working to produce and archive,” he says. “Being able to display these images on the PC easily and clearly, thanks to the digital media capabilities of Windows XP, will become essential for the successful operation of our business.”

Enhanced Plug and Play is yet another plus, Gibbs adds: “In the past, a widespread upgrade of our client hardware would easily take a month because of the differences in peripheral drivers from one model to the next and related operating-system issues. But with Windows XP Plug and

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E-Commerce and LAN  
Infrastructure Services Director  
Kemper Insurance

Play we'll be cutting this down to a matter of days." Finally, there's support on Windows XP for wireless 802.1x networking. "Wireless is just beginning to get some play in the organization, but it will definitely become more important in the next few years," he says. "So it's good to know that we're already prepared to move with it."

### **Office XP Professional a Clear Winner**

Gibbs and his colleagues are delighted to be bringing Office XP Professional to the desktops and laptops of their users. But as Gibbs's colleague Senior Infrastructure and Support Consultant Patrick Schilling explains, the selection of Office XP wasn't an automatic thing. "Our CIO believes strongly in using the very best product for the job, so we didn't pick Office XP just because we were moving to Windows XP," he says. "Instead, we had to prove that Office XP could stack up against the competition. And in a head-to-head evaluation against another product we were seriously considering, it did."

Among the Office XP features that Schilling liked best were the file-recovery system, Task Panes, and the Custom Installation Wizard—all of which he believes will simplify maintenance and make users' jobs easier. Office XP smart tags were another selling point: "We're already using the built-in smart tags to simplify document formatting, and we look forward to developing custom smart tags to help automate the entry of text into thousands of Word and Excel forms that users are working with daily," Schilling says. "It's a small example of how this deployment—not just Office XP and Windows XP, but also Windows 2000 Active Directory and the hardware upgrade we're doing simultaneously—will be making a big improvement in the way users, managers, administrators, and support staff do their work at Kemper Insurance."

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Patrick Schilling  
Senior Infrastructure and Support  
Consultant, PC Application  
Engineering  
Kemper Insurance

Microsoft Windows XP Professional gives you the freedom to do what you want at home and at work—simply, reliably, and securely.

For more information about Windows XP Professional, go to:  
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/>

### **For More Information**

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