



“We were very impressed by Configuration Manager. The fact that you can collect, analyze and act on all this information, 50,000 to 60,000 parameters for every server, all in one location ... this is a must-have tool for a company our size.”

— Jesper Buhl
Systems Specialist, Security

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Managed Servers

- 1,500

Platform

- Windows

Primary Business Needs

- Compliance and audit (SOX, FDA, DS484)
- Best practices (Microsoft hardening, ITIL)
- Patch management

Web Site

- www.nnit.com

NNIT Uses VMware vCenter Configuration Manager to Shrink Man-Hours for Regulatory Compliance & Achieve ITIL Standards

NNIT offers consulting, development, implementation and outsourcing IT services for the largest private companies and public sector organizations. Today, NNIT has approximately 1,000 employees, who together constitute Denmark’s fourth largest supplier of IT services. NNIT is owned by Novo Nordisk (NYSE:NVO), and in 2006, turnover exceeded DKK 1 billion.

Challenge

To accelerate best practice approaches for IT services management (ITIL), to comply with numerous global regulations including FDA, SOX and DS484, NNIT was in need of an efficient and effective way of managing its infrastructure, to move from a reactive organization to one that is aligned with business goals that are a strategic asset to the company.

Solution

With VMware vCenter™ Configuration Manager, NNIT more easily ensures continuous compliance, effectively manages change, streamlines audits and ensures servers are properly hardened against security vulnerabilities. Additionally, NNIT is accelerating its implementation of ITIL and moving toward automated, continuous improvement.

Results

- FDA configuration item (CI) list reviews now take minutes instead of hours.
- The server base grew from 1,000 to 1,500 with minimal IT staff increases.
- Each patching was reduced by approximately 250 man-hours.
- Continuous compliance auditing is possible for Danish DS484, Sarbanes-Oxley and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

As a vendor to the pharmaceutical industry, NNIT must comply with regulatory requirements across countries. It is subject to internal audits as well as occasional audits by its parent company, Novo Nordisk (NYSE:NVO), and other NNIT clients, adding up to about one audit every month for Danish DS484, Sarbanes-Oxley and the FDA compliance.

“For government regulations, you can’t do this stuff manually,” said Jesper Buhl, systems specialist for NNIT. “Severs change by the hour, so we never had an accurate picture of the current state of compliance. For patching, the big challenge was finding out where patches apply vs. what should be installed; that was virtually impossible before.”

The company recognized that to accomplish its goals and drive down the cost of compliance, it needed to automate activities such as patch assurance and configuration management, and adopt a single internal security and compliance posture that satisfied the many diverse external requirements it faced. To accomplish this, NNIT looked to the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), a collection of best practices intended to facilitate the delivery of high-quality IT services.

‘Must-Have Tool’

Working with IT solutions provider Aprismo, NNIT evaluated VMware vCenter Configuration Manager to address its needs. Configuration Manager centralizes and automates the monitoring, managing and auditing of hardware and software configurations across Windows, UNIX and Linux platforms. “We were very impressed by Configuration Manager,” Buhl said. “The fact that you can collect, analyze and act on all this information, 50,000 to 60,000 parameters for every server, all in one location ... this is a must-have tool for a company our size.”

Critical Support for ITIL Standards

NNIT relies on Configuration Manager to compare the “as is” state of its systems with the “to be,” or next desired state. It can quickly achieve the desired configuration state: compliant, secure and inline with ITIL best practices. Vulnerability assessments and automated patch assurance keep NNIT in continuous compliance with security policies. With vCenter Configuration Manager, team members receive alerts if anything is not inline with well-defined rules, allowing NNIT to remain in compliance with Sarbanes-Oxley, DS484 and the FDA. At any time, it can report on the state of compliance, quickly and easily.

“Compliance modules give us a tremendous overview,” Buhl said. “It’s a very easy way to see all the things that are actually out of compliance. That’s a value-add. Without Configuration Manager, it would be hard, if not impossible, to do all this. Parameters change by the hour, so we would never have an accurate picture of compliance without vCenter Configuration Manager.

Looking Ahead

NNIT has grown rapidly the past few years and likewise has expanded its server base from 1,000 to 1,500, a 50 percent increase, with minimal staff increases. Buhl looks forward to continuously increasing efficiency, particularly with the ability to sort and make consoles for each server with a new asset module. “There’s no doubt that Configuration Manager has and will continue to save us a lot of work,” Buhl said.

The Bottom Line

ACTIVITY	MAN-HOURS SAVED PER YEAR WITH VMWARE VCENTER CONFIGURATION MANAGER
Configuration item reviews	67
FDA compliance	336
Each patching	250

