

Oxford University

Complexity Meets Simplicity

Providing a Superior Education

As one of the world's pre-eminent universities, Oxford University maintains exceptionally high standards for its students' education. Part of providing that experience means keeping the oldest university in the English-speaking world on the cutting edge. The recent and continuing growth in the use of Macs in Oxford means supporting these machines has become a priority. According to James Partridge, the Oxford University Computing Services' Mac Specialist, "We have to be able to provide the infrastructure for student and staff Macs, and you can't do that kind of thing just by going around with a firewire drive. It's not going to work."

"I Wish Our Software Would Do That"

James also had to find a way to manage the complexity of his environment. "Our University has a highly devolved environment: some Colleges or Departments will only have a handful of Macs, others have quite large deployments." In order to get up to speed, and provide the machines and support that would keep up with the increasing demands, he turned to Casper. "It's safe to say, I really don't know how we would have done it without Casper. There was no other product that we looked at that could come close to supporting our needs."

Of course, James had to make the case for separate Mac OS software, as opposed to Windows software with a Mac component. "It was very easy with Casper to say, this is native to the platform, it's designed for the platform, it's designed with an understanding of the platform." He also found that a quick demo was enough to win over his department. "The reaction internally from some of my Windows colleagues was, 'I wish our software would do that.'"

An Intuitive Experience

James found that he and his department were able to get up to speed quickly once Casper was installed. "In just six months we've been able to get to a production-level supported service. That includes learning how to use Casper ourselves, training, and deploying it within Computing Services."

He credits the JAMF Software team for creating a product that was built with his needs in mind. "It is so obviously a product that has evolved on the basis of real experience, rather than a product that has been designed in a lab, on the basis of perceived need." He has also found that getting Casper set up has been extremely easy. "It's such an Apple way of thinking. You can press the 'set up now' button, and go off and get a cup of tea." He continues, "For people like myself who've had to struggle through hours of fiddling with poorly documented software it's absolutely just a joy."

Situation

Needs:

- Remote Mac Support
- Reduced liabilities for environment & hospital
- Simplified package creation & remote deployment

Environment:

- 150+ Macs with potential for rapid growth
- Wired and wireless users
- Uses include staff machines, a help center, and lecture rooms

Impact:



"We have a very complex environment, which makes it difficult to manage machines in a planned and consistent way. Casper fitted into that environment

more or less seamlessly and has meant that we can now offer a proper managed Mac service."

JAMES PARTRIDGE
APPLE MAC SPECIALIST
OXFORD UNIVERSITY
COMPUTING SERVICE
OXFORD, UK

JAMF
software
Creators of the Casper Suite