REDUCE TIME SPENT ON OPERATING SYSTEM (OS) DEPLOYMENT BY UP TO 75%

Whether you are actively planning a Windows 7 deployment this year or not, the influx of the OS onto the corporate network means you need to be able to manage it. Organizations must rely on fully automated processes to take care of their operating system deployment like Windows 7, including the assignment of an appropriate start environment and reboot management. To make sure the investment is secure; the solution also needs to provide 32-and 64-bit support. Furthermore, only an intelligent solution can package the operating system, drivers and configurations such that the IT staff’s workload is permanently reduced. Functions for timed rollouts and narrowband WANs are also crucial to ensure fast distribution that does not tie up many resources.

The DSM Windows 7 Deployment solution gives you the tools you need before, during and after a Windows 7 initiative. It equips you to manage a large-scale migration, the interim situation where you have a mix of legacy operating systems on the network, and the ongoing management of the heterogeneous (Windows, Mac, Linux) environment.
No matter how you plan to get to Windows 7, the DSM solution manages the three key scenarios for the introduction of the new operating system onto the corporate network:

- Complete hardware refresh to support Windows 7 Package, test & deploy Windows 7 applications & user settings centrally
- Staged adoption of Windows 7 through new hardware acquisition
- Migrate user settings, files & applications automatically
- Staged adoption of Windows 7 through upgrading existing PCs
- Create image, package & deploy OS, drivers & applications, re-apply settings

**Answering the key Windows 7 challenges**

The DSM Windows 7 Deployment Suite provides an end-to-end solution for managing the entire move to Windows 7 and beyond. The solution manages every stage of Windows 7 adoption.

### 1. Plan assess Windows 7 compatibility

Proper preparation is essential for a successful migration to Windows 7. However, organizations often underestimate the planning phases for major IT initiatives. Analysts recommend at least 12-18 months to prepare for the migration project. As the majority of organizations have not made the move to Windows Vista, Windows 7 will be the first major OS migration project in more than five years. The largest concern is the legacy infrastructure, which can cause critical compatibility issues due to its age and resulting complexity and results in the need for automatic methods to migrate and manage an operating system.

At a time of reduced IT headcount, and increased pressure to reduce costs, many businesses are unprepared for performing such a major initiative with limited resources, and the bottleneck this could cause.

Managers will understandably feel overwhelmed when planning what is likely to be the single largest IT project of recent years. The good news is FrontRange provides the tools that can quickly, easily and reliably automate the entire process, reducing the operating costs of the infrastructure as well as the burden on the IT department dramatically. FrontRange has a track record of successfully migrating customers to new major operating systems and utilizes best practices methodology in planning and implementing the migration.

### 2. Discover - Use inventory data & wizards to calculate costs & effort

After the initial project scoping phase, it is vital to conduct a full network inventory to gain complete visibility of all hardware and software on the network. Having this audit information readily to hand before the project commences is critical for a number of reasons:

- Project planning – to determine project timescales, it is essential to know the total number of assets affected and where they are located
- Budgeting – understanding where hardware needs to be upgraded or refreshed can help create accurate budgets and prevent the project running over cost
- Application compatibility – without full visibility of the software installed on PCs across the network, you can’t assess compatibility with Windows 7

FrontRange integrated hardware and software inventory functionalities can support this process by delivering a dynamic, transparent view of the infrastructure. The discovery solution will help you throughout the Windows 7 migration project, from initial planning and budgeting through to tracking progress and ensuring the migration of individual machines has been achieved successfully.

With a clear and precise picture of the existing IT infrastructure the best model can be created that will deliver the organizations upgrade requirements most efficiently. For instance, if a processor is underpowered, the entire machine probably needs to be replaced. But if a machine meets all the requirements for an upgrade apart from its memory, it is probably going to be more cost-effective to simply upgrade the RAM of that PC, rather than replace it completely.
3. Deploy - Package & deploy OS & applications, automatic driver selection, seamless user setting migration

Operating system migrations repeatedly require complete reinstallation of desktops, laptops and servers. Manual installation can be a significant cost factor, even when only a single system is involved, due to the time and productivity losses involved. So it is all the more evident that a large-scale operating system rollout, like that of Windows 7, demands full automation of the installation process.

The first step of deployment is to replace non-compliant hardware and Windows 7 incompatible software before creating the relevant packages, applications, security patches and drivers needed for the migration. The intelligent DSM solution will package the operating system, drivers and configurations such that the IT staff’s workload is vastly reduced. Functions for timed rollouts and narrowband WANs also become crucial to ensure fast distribution that does not tie up resources. When using DSM to package operating systems, the Software Factory (incorporating Packaging Workbench) is at your disposal to dramatically speed up the process. Software Factory wizards allow creation of a range of package types – from operating systems and applications through to system configurations and drivers – in no time at all. The wizards and the dialogue-based script editor provided by the Packaging Workbench from FrontRange implement all the necessary settings for you.

The DSM Windows 7 Deployment solution provides ready-made scripts for all common operating systems, and the improved parameter handling delivers additional installation flexibility. Importing and packaging drivers and correctly assigning them to individual devices represents one of the biggest challenges faced with operating system migration.

DSM integrated driver repository and its straightforward integration of new drivers provide organizations with a convincing solution for this difficult task. Simply add new drivers to the repository from a CD (or other media) or let the DSM solution automatically identify all drivers across the network and integrate them into the database. The drivers are then packaged and ready for company-wide installation, which can be carried out either dynamically or based on rules. Specially designed wizards mean that even plug & play or mass storage devices no longer require a separate, time-consuming driver download from the Internet, leaving organizations totally relieved of any driver packaging and assignment tasks.

After the packages have been created, they need to be tested thoroughly before they are rolled into production. The DSM Windows 7 Deployment solution contains integrated testing options to ensure 24/7 availability even after a change. Every change can be tested before roll out. The test environment exactly models the production environment and uses a live check to ensure that there are no unforeseen consequences of the planned changes. A clearly defined and structured packaging and testing process guarantees more stable systems and less downtime.

### DSM Windows 7 Deployment Solution

The DSM Windows 7 Deployment Suite provides an end-to-end solution for managing the entire move to Windows 7 and beyond:

- **Network Discovery**: full dynamic network inventory, Win7 compatibility wizards
- **OS & Application packaging**: packaging wizards for applications, OS, drivers, WinPE
- **User Profile Migration**: create and migrate user settings from legacy OS to Windows 7
- **Operating System Deployment**: automated image creation with user information, deployment to desktops and servers
- **Management Reporting**: monitor and report progress of roll-out success

### Key Benefits

- Reduce time spent on operating system (OS) deployment by up to 75%
- Easy and reliable migration, eliminates sources of errors
- Increased flexibility due to independence from hardware
- Shorter downtimes for users, especially during system recovery
- Reliable distribution to all company locations
- OS distribution with minimal resource requirements
- No manual interaction needed for driver handling
Another task required in the deployment phase is the migration of “user states” such as local files and configuration settings. With the integrated personality migration solution this can be done automatically, saving labor time and ensuring user satisfaction after the rollout is complete.

After testing the OS-package, you can now roll out Windows 7 to clients across the network. With FrontRange you can release and deploy the software packages dynamically based on policies or rules that you define. This helps you to both establish a high level of standardization and to make maintenance substantially less labor-intensive.

DSM’s intelligent push proxy architecture especially ensures success even for WANs with narrowband connections. The entire infrastructure adjusts flexibly to your company network – even taking into account firewalls.

The integrated disk imaging feature further facilitates backups procedures or large-scale system rollouts. The system supports the complete reboot management, including BIOS flash, partitioning and formatting of hard discs through to integrating the PC in your Active Directory. You can also decide whether your DHCP server or DSM OS Deployment takes care of IP configuration for the PC. When new PCs are connected to the network, the operating system is automatically installed in compliance with your rules. In the case of software defects, a few steps are all that it takes to initiate the complete installation process again.

4. Manage - Update & patch OS and applications, automate policy compliance, restore user settings

Once your Windows 7 operating system has been successfully rolled out, the challenges associated with keeping the software up-to-date don’t stop. FrontRange Desktop & Server Management enables IT to continually manage and update the environment effectively to meet users’ changing needs. The solution automatically monitors the operating system and applications to ensures that the software complies with predefined policies. Applications, settings, patches, and drivers are installed automatically across distributed and remote environments, whilst inventory and usage information is optimized to ensure efficient software license management and compliance.

FrontRange Solutions therefore not only helps meet your immediate migration project needs, but also provide time- and cost efficient client management tools for the day to day operations of your IT infrastructure, protecting your investment and allowing you to focus on your company’s growth ambitions for the future.