

Case Study: Tumbleweed

Customer Profile:

Tumbleweed is a leading provider of mission-critical Internet communications software products for enterprise and government. Focusing on secure content delivery, Tumbleweed has products for email security, secure transport, and validation authority.

Challenge

- Manage up to six updates per month to over 600 global customers within and across product lines
- Required automated and efficient system to deal with complex product update process

Benefits

- Tumbleweed lowered customer support call volume and improved customer satisfaction by offering a streamlined embedded process

Solution

- FlexNet Connect integrated with InstallShield to author, distribute, and update their software cost-effectively and reliably



About Tumbleweed

Tumbleweed is a leading provider of mission-critical Internet communications software products for enterprise and government. By making Internet communications secure, reliable and automated, Tumbleweed's email firewall, secure file transfer, secure email, and identity validation solutions help customers significantly reduce the cost of doing business. Tumbleweed products are used by millions of end-users and tens of thousands of corporations. Tumbleweed Communications was founded in 1993 and is headquartered in Redwood City, California.

The Challenge

Tumbleweed issues between one and six updates per month for their suite of enterprise software products, used by over 600 customers worldwide. Tumbleweed's e-mail firewall (Tumbleweed MMS™), Dynamic Anti-Spam Service, and secure e-mail (Tumbleweed IME™) products provide mission-critical Internet communications solutions, and it is critical that customers implement upgrades and patches as soon as they are available. Tumbleweed's products have multiple integration points with each other, and the company has typically supported multiple product and patch versions on multiple operating systems. This has made the update process fairly complex. In order to

ensure success and avoid crashing mission-critical customer systems, Tumbleweed's update process required customers to call or e-mail Tumbleweed to obtain downloads, and resulted in a large number of incoming calls and support requests. The company wanted to move to an automated solution that would require less customer effort and lower incoming call volume.

"Before moving to FlexNet Connect, our customers had to proactively contact us to request updates," said Anni Cuny, senior support engineer at Tumbleweed. "We really needed an update method that would be more convenient for our customers and increase internal efficiency, and FlexNet Connect completely solved this issue."

In addition, Tumbleweed sought an update method that would integrate with their existing installation authoring solution, allowing them to easily create and distribute updates.

The Flexera Software Solution

Tumbleweed chose FlexNet Connect because of its tight integration with the InstallShield installation-authoring tool used in house, and its ability to reduce support costs and increase customer satisfaction. With FlexNet Connect, Tumbleweed can easily author and distribute reliable updates in a cost-effective manner.



"FlexNet Connect provides us with a faster, more proactive way to distribute updates, while still meeting the needs of our customers, resulting in huge time savings for everyone involved."

Anni Curry
Senior Support Engineer
Tumbleweed

"It was simple to integrate FlexNet Connect into our product installation," said Satish Kumar, Software Development Manager for Tumbleweed. "It's very easy to use, and allows us to quickly author and distribute critical patches and other updates to our customers."

FlexNet Connect allows Tumbleweed to automatically notify their customers when there is an update or patch that needs to be installed and direct them to the location of the download. Tumbleweed also uses FlexNet Connect's InfoMessaging feature to directly notify their customers about new documentation and other available information.

"Our customers run our software on servers in busy enterprises and therefore need to control how and when updates happen. FlexNet Connect provides us with a faster, more proactive way to distribute updates, while still meeting the needs of our customers, resulting in huge time savings for everyone involved," said Cuny.

Results

Tumbleweed's use of FlexNet Connect has resulted in a reduction in incoming customer support calls and update requests, allowing employees to focus on other issues. Customers no longer have to request updates, resulting in faster update adoption rates and more

satisfied customers. In addition, Tumbleweed uses FlexNet Connect test utility to test updates before distribution, ensuring bulletproof downloads and installations.

"In addition to making updates easier for our customers, we are now starting to use FlexNet Connect's reporting capabilities, which will allow us to ensure all customers have received the appropriate updates. Now we will be able to figure out which customers are using specific versions of our software, and we can proactively ensure everyone is using the latest versions," said Cuny.

About Flexera Software

Flexera Software provides solutions that power the business of software for multiple customer segments, including hardware and software producers, engineers and developers, helping them uncover revenue opportunities, streamline their infrastructure and reduce costs. Flexera Software's proven solutions have been simplifying the business relationship between software and hardware producers and their enterprise and government customers for more than 20 years, enabling Flexera Software to maximize the value of the software the world develops and uses. For more information, please go to: www.flexerasoftware.com

**This case study has been updated to reflect the change of the product name from Update Service to FlexNet Connect in September 2006.*



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