Case Study
Automox

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IT Director at a healthcare company with 501-1,000 employees

✔ Review by a Real User

🛡 Verified by IT Central Station

What is our primary use case?

We use Automox for patch management, software distribution, and to implement security controls. Any time we have to connect to a machine and run an automated process, we use Automox. The solution gives us complete visibility for any laptop, desktop, or server in our environment regardless of where they are located. Automox gives us the tools for writing scripts to see even more if we need to.

We use the Automox worklets to create and automate customized tasks across endpoints all the time. We love going in and using the worklets to find solutions for common day to day stuff. Sometimes it's a worklet that we run on one machine, and sometimes it's a worklet that needs to be run on every machine in the environment. We use them all the time.

One example is when we had an old antivirus

that was on all our machines and we had a new antivirus that we needed to apply to the machines. So we created a worklet script that in one step removed the old antivirus. It was complicated because it had to check many buttons to guarantee that the old antivirus was removed and install the new antivirus, and then give us a report at the end that it was installed securely and effectively. So it was a complicated and long worklet, but it was very effective.

How has it helped my organization?

Automox has improved our organization in the security sense. We created a worklet that allows us to harden a machine after an employee leaves. So the scenario is, for example, that we terminate an employee in the middle of a

workday, maybe on a Wednesday at noon. We don't want that employee to log back into his machine or to extract data or to do anything dangerous. Automox gives us the ability to create tools so that we can make some changes inside that laptop. This way the person cannot log in as usual. And just by virtue of having an agent on the machine from Automox, with creativity from us or the user base, we can get some great things done.

Automox has saved us on multiple tasks at least 10 to 15 hours a week. There are times when I don't even know how we would have done some of the things that we do today without Automox. I can't even put that into time, but just having Automox at our fingertips has enabled us to do stuff so much quicker, so much easier.

What is most valuable?

The flexibility in creating tools to make changes on remote machines is most valuable to me. The reporting feature is also fantastic because on any given day I can bring up a list of machines that don't have patches, for example. Or I can bring up a list of machines that are in my environment on a certain day. The solution helps me with not only my own role, and what I look for internally myself, but it also helps during audits. I can go in and look at the number of machines in there, and their owners and timelines. It certainly helps tell a story for anything that IT requires.

Being a cloud-native platform was one of the

features and reasons we went with Automox. Having machines that are hosted in a particular facility is limited in a lot of cases to VPNs and subject to slowness and outages.

Automated patching has helped us to a great degree to know that patches will happen regardless of whether we jump in or not. And it's a positive feature.

What needs improvement?

I'm not sure about areas of room for improvement. Basically, just improving the product or building more features into the product will help us. For example, asset management would be a great feature to add to Automox. We would run easier scripts or more out of the box scripts that would help us in audits. It's not a defect in the product. It's just that the product is so strong that I think Automox could add even greater functionality. They're doing it every day and they're adding features all the time. It's just that you start dreaming about all the things you could do with Automox and asset management is one of the things that really resonates with us.

For how long have I used the solution?

We've been using Automox for a little over two years now.

What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

Scalability works fine, and all the scalability is in the cloud with Automox. They make it easy to do this. As they've grown, it's become obvious that it's easier to do it. Initially, when we bought the product, it was a little challenging as they were growing while we were growing. Yet they provided the tools to be able to scale, as needed, very effectively.I can't give you exact numbers, because it changes on a daily basis, but we are monitoring thousands of endpoints. We have end-user endpoints that are probably in the 1500 and above position. And we have server nodes that are probably close to thousands.At this stage, we've 100% adopted the solution so we don't have plans to increase our usage. There's not a computer server of ours that hasn't gotten the agent and is not fully implemented into the Automox way of thinking. As we bring clients online for new hires, they have the Automox agent ready to be deployed in the scripts. The minute the person has his machine and is using it, he's Automox ready.

How are customer service and technical support?

I would rate Automox technical support as really excellent. There were times when we needed them. We haven't always gotten the answer back immediately because they've misunderstood what we said or something has

happened. Yet the quality of the people answering our questions, and the attentiveness to our business, is way beyond what we get with comparable tools and products from much bigger companies. We're really, really happy with the support we get from Automox.

Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

Before Automox, we used a home grown solution. It's something that we put together ourselves that wasn't ideal for a growing company.

How was the initial setup?

It takes a little bit of time to ramp up and understand how the Automox tool works and how effective it can be. So once you put a few days of moving through the system and understanding it, the solution becomes very easy to use.

The solution setup is straightforward. We have some intelligent people who were involved in the patching process, who understand Active Directory, who understand the patching process and understand internally our users and how they work. All along the way, AutoMox was excellent in providing us with all the help and resources we needed to understand how to do stuff. They were there for our questions and suggestions as we hit roadblocks, and to try and figure out different ways of doing things. They

were instrumental in getting us up and running very quickly.

I think it took us two or three weeks to get comfortable with how we had set it up and to start not only pushing out the first patches, but also to try and run different software packages and do different things with it. We didn't exclusively dedicate time to AutoMox. We jumped in and out for a period of two weeks while emailing support at AutoMox on maybe one or two questions. We were up and running very, very quickly.Being a small company, we realized that we needed a product that would do the work. Our implementation was essentially just to look at what we had existing in our patch rollout tool prior to AutoMox, and to get AutoMox side-by-side with this tool and copy over dates, times, groups. This way we could get the patches rolled out whilst at the same time, we're looking at our software management tool. The team had no trouble setting up policies with Automox.

What was our ROI?

We have seen a return on our investment. Number one, fewer man hours are spent trying to understand how to roll out patches. Number two is reporting. You can go inside Automox and get reports to see exactly what you have.

The visibility, far beyond patching, allows us to see which machines have what sort of software installed, or which users are using old hardware. The old hardware is all available inside so you

can go in and say, "Show me everybody who's using this particular model of a laptop, which is four to five years old." You can plan to reach out to these people in good time and get them swapped out with newer hardware. So the list of things is endless. It's just really up to the user to be creative in how they use it.

What's my experience with pricing, setup cost, and licensing?

Automox just charges us a set amount per user, per month, for using the product. That is very important to us. Because it's a cloud-native solution, you're saving on the cost of hosting an on-premises solution on your servers.

Which other solutions did I evaluate?

We looked at some solutions that were similar yet they were hosted on site. Being a cloud native platform was a reason we ultimately chose Automox. Not having an appliance in our environment was very positive. Not having to pay for the bandwidth and the power of that appliance in our environment was positive.

We did a brief proof of concept with Automox and it worked well, so we were already sold by the time we had seen the demo. We understood the pricing and we understood all the other features that they'd shown us. The demo was

important, but our minds were already made up. We liked what we saw.We looked at an IBM solution, but I can't remember the name of the solution. We also looked at another third party solution that I can't remember the name of either. The IBM solution was extremely costly. It required $250,000 in upfront money, and a lot of learning. It even required that we had onsite hardware. The other solution that we looked at was semi-cloud-based and it also required a lot of capital investment into the product. The beauty of Automox is that there is no upfront money. There is no server that needs to be installed in your environment. The pricing is all based upon what you use and everything is in the cloud. It works much better than the other solutions that we evaluated.

What other advice do I have?

Cross-platform patch management is very important because we have a diverse environment and need the flexibility of one tool that can do everything. We automate our patching via Automox and also manage it manually. We have automation set up that runs once a month on a certain date. Then we go in and discuss elements of the business that would stop us giving certain patches to people on a certain day. So automation is in place, but we do sit down and have a hard think every month about whether the date that we're planning to roll out the patches works or if there are any changes that we need to make prior to the patch roll out.

The solution provides patch management from a single console across Windows, Mac OS, and Linux. It gives us the ability to manage all our endpoints for patching in a single pane of glass with advanced features that enable us to turn on, turn off, change days, and change the criteria for how patches are delivered to certain groups of machines. The patch management console requires an owner, a person who will be dedicated to managing patching going forward. Once that person is trained, they become a master in how to do it. So it's not the most simple thing if you want to use advanced features, but it's very effective in helping you see everything that you need to patch at your fingertips and to edit it easier.

Automox works quickly to do its job and it will try to find machines that are turned on to implement workloads or patches. Sometimes if you want something done you're at the mercy of people having their machines turned on. The beauty is that even if a machine is not on and it only comes online later in the day or a week later, Automox realizes that this machine is missing worklets, patches, tools, or software, and installs them after the fact.

Automox has downtime when they provide maintenance, but they keep it to off-business hours. So it rarely impacts businesses who are using it. There were times in the past, when they realized that they were close to capacity, and they asked for feedback on how things were working. Then they made changes with some downtime to facilitate being a better product

and this is completely understandable. Being in the software business ourselves, and hosting solutions for customers, we realize that sometimes you can do 95% of your maintenance off-hours, as we do. But sometimes, you need to impact the business day in the event that there are large changes that need to be made.

I would say go try and buy. You don't have to make a huge capital investment to try out the solution and see if it fits your environment. They're a great company to work with on multiple levels because their product works. It's efficient, easy to implement and consistently delivers. Don't be afraid to reach out to them with any questions. They work like a company in 2021 should. They're very attentive to their customers for everything from billing to technical support, to all sorts of interactions. Automox has very modern day thinking.

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