

DELIVER CLIENT DEVICES FASTER

using Dell™ Connected Configuration services



- Simplify and accelerate deployments
- Integrate with Dell manufacturing facilities
- Real-time configuration updates

vs. Dell Static Imaging

This is an abridged version of a Principled Technologies report. Read the full story with an expanded testing process information at <http://facts.pt/LskcP3>.

So—you've finally decided on new systems for your employees. Now comes the herculean task of getting your organization's desired applications onto each employee's system. Even if you have an on-premises solution for distributing the appropriate system image onto your new laptop fleet, each system requires in-house administrator time and attention to customize and deploy the image before it reaches an employee. With Dell Connected Configuration services, you can skip the tedious in-house imaging process and customize each laptop before it leaves the factory, already joined to your organization's Active Directory Domain and fully up-to-date, so that systems are ready for employees to use the moment they arrive.

At Principled Technologies, we investigated how the Dell Connected Configuration service could save time configuring a corporate image over Static Image Deployment. After the initial setup period, deploying a laptop with Dell Connected Configuration required no additional configuration after leaving the factory. This means that IT staff could skip the time-consuming in-house process of deploying customized system images, savings that could multiply when ordering and imaging an entire fleet of systems. When IT staff spend less time deploying laptops, they have more opportunity to focus on strategic tasks that can improve your business. When new employees get their systems right away, they become productive more quickly.



SYSTEMS CUSTOMIZED, DELIVERED, AND READY TO GO

Deploying new PCs with approved applications has traditionally required a significant effort from IT administrators. Storing systems for future use is problematic: storage space is at a premium, you don't know what those future employees will require, and by the time the system is needed, the applications and drivers may be out of date. Ordering new laptops as needed makes more sense, but the time it takes to ship the laptop to the IT staff first for customization, and then to deliver or ship it to a local or remote employee, can slow down your business.

With Dell Connected Configuration services, IT admins can order fully configured laptops, customized for each employee, straight from the factory and ship them directly to employees without hands-on administrator customization time. This means an employee can begin using his or her system immediately because it has the latest updates, drivers, patches, and applications preloaded upon arrival. Your organization provides, owns, and controls the infrastructure so it remains secure: Dell simply hosts your server at their facility that connects to your in-house environment. Dell Connected Configuration systems arrive at your location already joined to the domain, with any required BIOS configuration changes, encryption, or partitioning that your company desires. Because new patches or updates are easily imported into Connected Configuration, they can be applied to new systems automatically before they leave the factory.

Dell Static Imaging provides some automation by allowing customers to submit a customized operating system that Dell then applies onto new PCs. However, if your employees in different departments require different applications, IT admins still have to take the time to customize those systems after they ship from the factory. For updates or patches released since the initial image creation, administrators have to spend extra time integrating them into the corporate image. Even imaging these systems with an in-house SCCM environment would add additional time and steps for customization.

To show how much time Dell Connected Configuration services can save, we compared the time to configure a laptop using both Dell Connected Configuration and Dell Static Imaging processes. For detailed test information, see the appendices in the full report at <http://facts.pt/LskcP3>.

Less hands-on administrator time for deployment

Consider this scenario: Your company has just hired a new employee who will work from a small remote office without a dedicated IT staff. How quickly and easily can this new employee get a laptop and start working?

Your IT admin places an order for a new system, which first requires they complete the onboarding process, which means making sure the correct image goes on

the laptop before it ships out of the factory. Then, the administrator must ensure that post-factory provisioning (such as updating, application installation, and integration into the corporate domain) and distribution happens.

As Figure 1 shows, Dell Connected Configuration required 86 percent less total hands-on administrator time than using Static Imaging to get an updated system in the remote employee's hands.

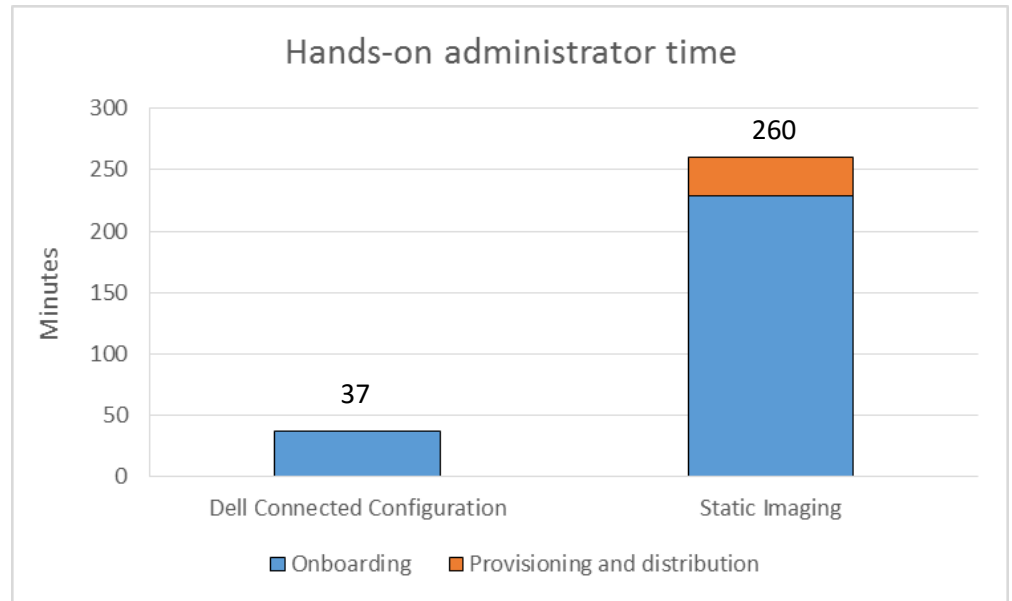


Figure 1: Using Dell Connected Configuration services reduced total administrator time by 86 percent compared to Static Imaging.

Our team spent only 37 minutes completing Dell Connected Configuration requirements with Dell technicians prior to the laptop leaving the factory. From there, Dell shipped the completed system directly to the employee. Dell Connected Configuration required no provisioning and distribution time from the administrator, because all drivers and applications were already up to date. The Static Imaging process required far more additional time—over four hours to submit our image, complete paperwork, and then update and ship the system for employee use when it arrived at the home office. See Appendix A in the full report at <http://facts.pt/LskcP3> for the detailed breakdown of the steps we took with each deployment process.

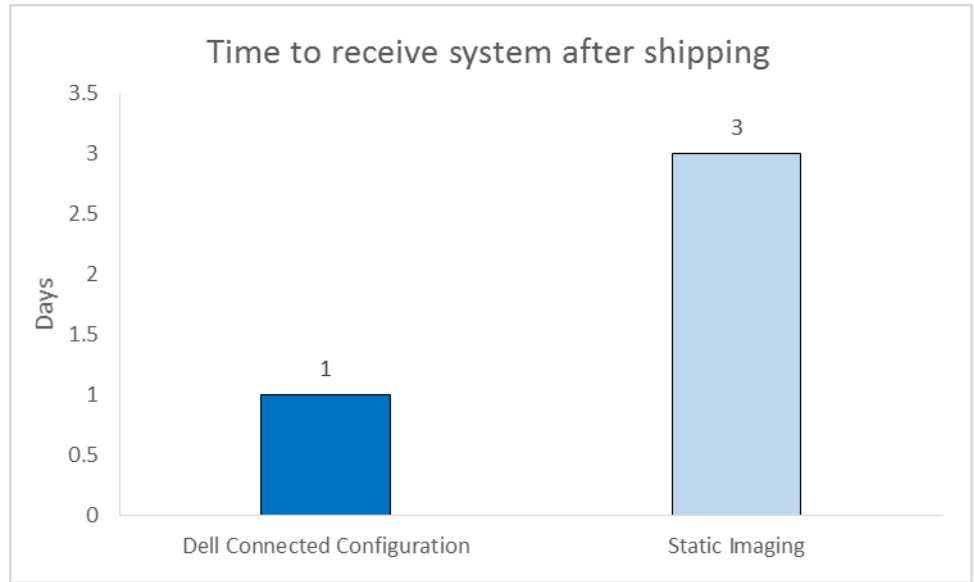
Please note that while the administrator would not have to complete the onboarding process for each laptop, in a large order they would need to provision and ship each laptop individually. Using Dell Connected Configuration for system deployment could save plenty of administrator time and money in shipping costs for large laptop orders.

Save up to two days when shipping new systems to remote employees

We found that using Dell Connected Configuration services for image deployment meant that the remote employee could have their system two days sooner than using Dell Static Imaging (see Figure 2). The system shipped using Dell Connected

configuration could be overnighted straight from the factory to the remote employee, requiring only one day. The system shipped using Static Imaging would first go to the IT administrator, who would complete the post-factory system provisioning process, and then ship the system overnight to the remote employee.

Figure 2: Using Dell Connected Configuration service had a system in a remote employee's hands two days sooner than using Static Imaging.



CONCLUSION

The days of administrators going through lengthy system provisioning procedures to update and patch client images on new employee systems are gone. With Dell Connected Configuration service, your organization can get any number of systems delivered to your door with the latest company image loaded and customized for your employees' needs. Dell Connected Configuration Service lets customers using management software such as SCCM integrate existing software and processes securely into the Dell manufacturing process at the factory using a secure VPN with your own network/firewall standards, so you can change configurations from your location in real time, on your time. From your headquarters, you can complete a number of tasks on new systems, including imaging, updating BIOS settings, partitioning and encrypting hard drives, and installing user-specific software.

As we found, using Dell Connected Configuration Service could save significant time for a laptop deployment, allowing your administrative staff to focus on other ways to improve your business IT. Additionally, your employees can receive their new systems more quickly, potentially avoiding days of waiting for a system to be ready. These time saving advantages of Dell Connected Configuration services can mean a more efficient process for deploying new systems, and can boost productivity by putting the up-to-date tools employees need to do their jobs into their hands more quickly.

ABOUT PRINCIPLED TECHNOLOGIES



Principled Technologies, Inc.
1007 Slater Road, Suite 300
Durham, NC, 27703
www.principledtechnologies.com

We provide industry-leading technology assessment and fact-based marketing services. We bring to every assignment extensive experience with and expertise in all aspects of technology testing and analysis, from researching new technologies, to developing new methodologies, to testing with existing and new tools.

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Our founders, Mark L. Van Name and Bill Catchings, have worked together in technology assessment for over 20 years. As journalists, they published over a thousand articles on a wide array of technology subjects. They created and led the Ziff-Davis Benchmark Operation, which developed such industry-standard benchmarks as Ziff Davis Media's Winstone and WebBench. They founded and led eTesting Labs, and after the acquisition of that company by Lionbridge Technologies were the head and CTO of VeriTest.

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