

# Shavlik Case Study



## WHALEN FURNITURE

### Growing Furniture Manufacturer Gains Visibility and Efficiency in System Protection through Automated Patch Management

MANUFACTURING

#### CUSTOMER OVERVIEW:

With locations in the U.S., Mexico, and China, Whalen Furniture is a premier furniture manufacturer delivering quality furniture to homes and businesses since 1983.

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Whalen Furniture needed an improved patch management solution that was more efficient, less time consuming, reduced risk, and ensured uptime on a 24/7 basis to support the needs of a rapidly growing global company.

#### SOLUTION:

After watching a demonstration of Shavlik NetChk Protect, Whalen Furniture implemented NetChk Protect Plus Antivirus and now has clear visibility into an efficient, automated patch management process and antivirus protection with immediate results and reduced business risk.

#### BENEFITS:

- ▶ Risk to system downtime is reduced through efficient multi-vendor patch management capabilities
- ▶ Integrated patch management and antivirus offering ensures in-depth protection for laptops, desktops, and servers at a reduced cost
- ▶ Automated, fine-grained control over patch deployment options

#### Ivan Breit, IT Administrator, Whalen Furniture

Upon becoming a member of the Whalen team responsible for nearly every aspect of IT, including systems management, software management, security management, and everyday helpdesk support, it didn't take long for Ivan Breit to see that any downtime or disruption in business services experienced within any of Whalen's manufacturing systems or processes would quickly result in a significant increase in the cost of doing business.

In fact, a single missing patch could be 'the one' that gets exploited and used to compromise an ERP system, a bar-coding system, or a warehouse management system located in their manufacturing plant. Downtime for any of these systems could result in all shipping activity being halted, causing the 90+ distribution trucks to sit at their docks with no product to load or deliver.

With missed deadlines, Whalen could potentially be fined by the shipping companies and experience mass-quantity returns from clients that never received their goods.

A virus-related incident brought the importance of patch management to the attention of Whalen when they experienced a mail system compromise that was introduced through a virus that found its way around their incumbent endpoint antivirus (AV) product. More specifically, Whalen found their Exchange server was compromised and used for mass mailing, placing their domain on the SPAM and filtering blacklists, preventing all emails from being sent to their clients, resellers, and suppliers located outside of the organization.

It took Breit and one other administrator over six hours to identify and isolate the infecting culprit, clean it, patch it, and then address the other systems that the virus made its way on to. It took even longer to get their domain removed from the SPAM lists. This disruption in

*"If you don't own it – buy it.  
It's been a lifesaver for me."*

**IVAN BREIT, IT ADMINISTRATOR,  
WHALEN FURNITURE**



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business not only cost Whalen a lot of time and money to address, it caused some concern on behalf of their clients and partners.

When reflecting on the incident, Whalen realized that the virus-related downtime was a major operational concern; what a nightmare they could face if an unpatched computer served as a host to a virus.

Once they understood the importance that patch management could play in protecting their network, they wanted assurances that all computers were patched and protected at all times.

Whalen had been using an outsourcing service, giving them responsibility only for addressing issues as they arose. Even with this limited scope, the service provider was not able to meet the needs of the growing company, and something had to change.

Once on board, Breit reviewed the company's network and discovered that 90% of machines were infected and 3 out of 10 machines had their virus software disabled. To combat the threat of system downtime due to a system breach, and recognizing his constraint of being extremely limited in terms of staff and bandwidth, Breit first turned to the low-hanging fruit of patch management by utilizing Microsoft's Windows Server Update Services (WSUS). This helped minimize the risk and provided a baseline level of automation for this activity by keeping the Microsoft Windows operating system and related Microsoft applications up-to-date; this was definitely a step in the right direction.

But, managing Microsoft patches alone is not enough; more had to be done.

There are many non-Microsoft applications running on their systems that are vulnerable to attack if they are left unpatched.

In an attempt to further mitigate the risk beyond the

*"The pilot was the best experience I have had with any software company. It took only a few minutes to install – a few minutes to set permissions – and we had results in less than 30 minutes from the first scan."*

Microsoft solution, Breit worked diligently at filling the gap, manually identifying 3rd-party patches in an attempt to keep their systems up to date regardless of the applications installed. This was all to no avail as the manual process of physically running around from machine to machine in order to identify what had been installed, what had been patched, which patches failed to install, and which patches were missing, did not allow this to be a feasible task for any length of time.

Other patch management challenges Whalen faced were the need to provide support on a 24/7 basis, the ability to deploy patches in a timely manner, the ability to grow with the company, and be affordable.

When a representative from Shavlik Technologies contacted Ivan to help him find an alternative to the time-consuming manual process he was following, he openly welcomed the call and decided to seriously consider employing an automated, full-system, any-vendor, patch management solution that was being offered by Shavlik.

The management team at Whalen was unaware of the scope of issues and risks associated with non-patched systems. Of course, once they were made aware of the magnitude of the risk associated with not having the proper patches in place, the managers were quickly on board to move forward with the Shavlik offering in a controlled US-based pilot.



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Whalen Furniture chose to deploy the Shavlik antivirus offering at the same time they deployed the patch management solution. The main drivers behind this decision were:

1. Including antivirus management with patch management made sense both financially and operationally.
2. The previous AV product was about to expire, the renewal cost was there, and patching tied to AV could be achieved for the same price.
3. Rigorous testing of the Shavlik AV product proved better than the existing AV product from Symantec. Performance was noted as “a dramatic performance increase” with the footprint of the Shavlik solution being much lighter. Many users thought their systems had been upgraded.
4. The customization of virus response was great in the Shavlik solution as compared to their incumbent deployment.

The pilot, focused squarely on patch assessment and patch deployment for key endpoints and end users located in the US, ultimately provided full patch assessment across the entire US region.

Upon completion of the scans, the pilot confirmed the fact that the virus had easily slipped past their incumbent endpoint AV installation. It also pointed out that the virus could have been thwarted by having their endpoint systems patched with the latest updates.

With the full scan results for the entire US environment returned to them in under 30 minutes, the team at Whalen knew it was time for a proper deployment through their entire environment. Whalen defined the patch management deployment project with the following scope:

- ▶ Source an affordable patch management solution that

*“As a bonus, we were able to deploy Shavlik’s antivirus solution without additional licensing cost, thereby eliminating the renewal cost, heavy footprint, and resource drain associated with the incumbent AV product that had already failed us on at least once occasion.”*

minimizes the security risk for its local and mobile US users

- ▶ The solution must ultimately provide 24x7 multi-national support
- ▶ The solution will minimize labor costs in ongoing patch management, with improved patch deployment in terms of timeliness, testing, and minimum down-time for both the endpoints and the end users
- ▶ Obtain management support through a solution that is capable of growing with the business

The definition of success for this patch management project was pretty straightforward; mitigate the risk of attack as much as possible in order to keep Whalen’s systems up and running while keeping the number of infections down.

#### **As part of this patch management program, Whalen was looking for:**

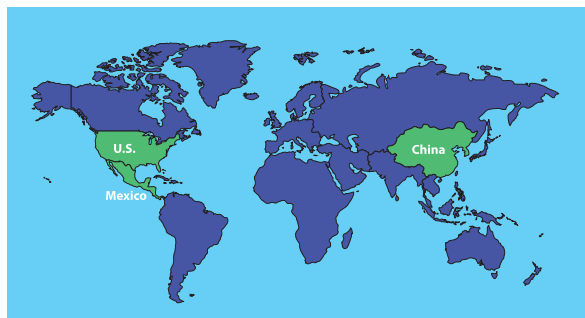
**VISIBILITY** – A clear view into what’s been patched and what’s not patched – not just for Microsoft systems and applications, but for all applications running on their business systems.

**AUTOMATION** – The ability to work toward a goal of deploying patches within one week of patch availability; scheduling and staging their patch deployment based on risk, scope, and time of day; and defining how much



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control the end user has over the process (the ability to postpone a patch installation for a set period or indefinitely – or, for critical patches, the ability to force the deployment and reboot immediately).

**EFFICIENCY:** A high level of configuration in order to define when the patches deploy, how they are deployed, when the reboot takes place (if required) – allowing Breit to manage the deployments by specific, physical groups of systems [location, IP range, subnet] as well as logical groups of systems [manufacturing, HR, datacenter].

The solution not only needed to support the growing needs of Whalen’s manufacturing processes, but also their ever-expanding environment which currently included the United States, Mexico and China.

The conversion from the trial to the production deployment was very simple, achieved by applying a new license key to the existing pilot deployment. Following the conversion, Breit was able to bring all of the targeted trial systems up to date with all selected patches – doing so in only a matter of days. This was accomplished by performing the patch deployment during the business day to ensure the patch installations were successful and then rebooting the systems at night as the employees left for the day.

The Whalen executives didn’t necessarily want multiple reports showing what was going on with respect to patch management – they simply wanted Breit to handle system

availability with accuracy and efficiency. The solution provided by Shavlik did just this, giving Breit the tools and reports necessary to deliver confidently on the executive teams’ expectations – including the detailed reports, if this need ever did arise.

#### Success Achieved since the Patch Program was Implemented

- ▶ 90% reduction in spyware infections – rate dropped even more since the initial deployment
- ▶ No single virus has been able to exploit their systems
- ▶ Solution completely eliminated the need for additional personnel
- ▶ Over a 90% savings in IT staff time that would have otherwise been allocated to patch management
- ▶ Shavlik exceeded expectations overall and provided great support throughout the entire process

#### Next Steps

- ▶ Run complete patch assessments and patch deployments in China and Mexico
- ▶ Whalen is in the process of implementing Shavlik’s integrated power management features in order to save the company additional money by turning off systems when users forget to at night and over the weekend

#### Conclusion

There was never enough time for Whalen to manage all aspects of patch management. All the time spent on this task still didn’t even come close to getting the job done properly. Ultimately, Whalen would have had to hire a full time employee just to keep up on patching, and this person would have had to work during the normal business hours, kicking people off their machines and shutting down systems in order to install the patches. With the automated solution from Shavlik, Whalen gained clear visibility into their systems and eliminated the waste



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of spending a full-time salary covering a 40-hour per week position, reducing it down to just a few hours per week as handled by the current staff. This ultimately put precious time back into the day for their IT administrator.

#### **About Shavlik Technologies**

Shavlik Technologies, LLC, is a leading provider of cloud-enabled software that changes the rules of IT management with technology that reduces the time to value for any size organization from months to minutes. Shavlik's innovative approach makes it extremely easy, automatic and fast to centralize and automate processes for managing IT assets. This includes deploying software, taking inventory of physical and virtual assets, configuring systems, patching or updating software, controlling power usage, and maintaining antivirus protection. With thousands of customers worldwide, Shavlik is trusted to provide solutions that increase efficiencies in IT management while at the same time maintaining well-managed, secure and highly available IT assets.

**More information can be found at [www.shavlik.com](http://www.shavlik.com).**