

Green IT

Ford saves more than one million dollars by switching off PCs at night

Simple step of powering down laptops and desktop PCs will help Ford save USD 1.2 million and reduce its carbon footprint by 16,000 to 25,000 metric tons annually **InformationWeek News Network, March 24, 2010**

At Ford Motor Company, the commitment to energy efficiency and saving money has started at the office computer. Under a new program called PC Power Management, the power settings on Windows laptops and desktop computers are centrally controlled to reduce energy waste and optimize software updates. A managed shutdown of computer systems not in use, especially overnight and on weekends, further reduces energy use.

At the same time, the system ensures all computers connected to the Ford Intranet are awake and able to receive software deliveries during off hours, decreasing downtime during working hours due to software loads.

The savings to the company on power cost alone is expected to top USD 1.2 million annually when the system is fully implemented. By reducing PC power consumption, Ford also stands to reduce its carbon footprint by an estimated 16,000 to 25,000 metric tons annually.

"In the past, as many as 60 percent of Ford's PC users haven't shut their PCs off at the end of the business day, resulting in wasted energy," said Keith Forte, Ford IT project supervisor. "Going forward, we'll be able to manage PC power consumption more efficiently while minimizing interruptions during the working day as a result of software updates."

PC Power Management is being rolled out to Ford computer users across the US this month. It will be migrated to Ford operations around the world later in the year.

The cost savings and reduced carbon footprint are obtained by developing "Power Profiles" for each PC in the company. With its power profile enabled, each PC monitors its usage patterns and determines when it can be turned off. If the user is working late, he or she will be alerted of the approaching power down and given the opportunity to delay it. In addition, the PC is able to detect when a Microsoft Office product is active and is able to save open documents before shutting down in case the user is not present.

Ford developed its PC Power Management system with NightWatchman software from 1E Inc. 1E research found that almost half of all employees who use computers at work typically do not power them down at the end of the working day. In the US alone, over USD 2.8 billion of PC power is being wasted every year, according to 1E.