**[Review](http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/products/review-kace-networks-kbox-1100-systems-management-appliance/683): KACE Networks KBOX 1100 Systems Management Appliance**

By Erik Eckel, September 4, 2009, 8:01 AM PDT

KACE Networks markets its KBOX Systems Management appliance as delivering a fully integrated systems management solution. The Free BSD-powered KBOX 1100 does just that, providing enterprise IT administrators with a single solution for *managing hardware* and *software inventories*, *performing asset management functions*, *powering configuration management*, *supporting help desk operations*, *fueling software distribution* and more.

**Specifications**

* **Manufacturer:** KACE Networks, Inc.
* **Product:** KBOX 1100 Systems Management Appliance
* **Version:** 4.3.20109
* **Operating systems:** Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows Server 2003, Windows Vista, Windows 2008 (x86 and x86\_64), Mac OS X 10.4-10.6, Red Hat Linux AS and ES and iPhone or iTouch 2.0 or later.
* **Web Admin:** Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0+, Netscape, Mozilla, Firefox, Opera, Safari.
* **Free Trial:** [KBOX 1100](http://www.kace.com/products/systems-management-appliance/models.php)
* **Price:** Approximately $11,200 street
* For a closer look, check out the [TechRepublic Photo Gallery](http://content.techrepublic.com.com/2346-13629_11-336648.html)

**Who’s it for?**

Enterprise IT departments can leverage the KBOX 1100’s systems management services to centrally administer up to 3,000 nodes and store up to 230GB of application files, logs and reports. Organizations with large numbers of servers, workstations and laptops, including those offices supporting remote locations, can lower costs, more quickly close trouble tickets, improve security and fine-tune efficiencies by deploying the KBOX 1100.

**What problem does it solve?**

KACE Networks’ KBOX 1100 Systems Management Appliance enables performing a wide range of critical computer maintenance tasks throughout an enterprise network. Using the KBOX’s centralized administrative console, IT staff can remotely maintain thousands of network nodes.

The well-powered KBOX 1100 — which packs a pair of Xeon Quad Core 2.0 GHz CPUs, 4GB of RAM, a RAID 1 array and dual gigabit Ethernet NICs — ***manages hardware inventory and software licenses and compliance, application and software distribution, patch management, reporting and dashboards, alerting, remote control, self-service capabilities, scripting, configuration policies, deployment and monitoring of Windows, Mac and Linux agents and more*.** Centralizing these tasks and automating as many of these processes as possible frees IT staff to spend more time on other tasks, helps prevent downtime, heightens security, streamlines performance and encourages licensing compliance.

**Standout features**

**OS independent** - The KBOX Systems Management Appliance supports a wide range of Windows, Linux and Macintosh operating systems, as well as portable Apple devices.

**Inventory management** - The KBOX Device Discovery and Inventory component enables auto discovery of network-wide software applications and hardware configurations. Administrators can use either managed agents or agentless network scanning to perform these inventory operations.

**Application distribution** - The KBOX 1100 can remotely administer, install and distribute applications, operating system and software program service packs, updates and other software to Windows, Macintosh and Linux client machines and servers.

**Patch management -** Patch management functionality enables the KBOX 1100 to centralize approval and distribution of a wide range of patches for Windows, Macintosh and Linux computers. The KBOX appliance taps its AppDeploy Live feature to link to AppDeploy.com’s vast systems management data, best practices and related information libraries.

**Reporting and alerts -** The KBOX 1100 collects prepackaged reports as well as wizard-based tools enterprise administrators can utilize to create customizable reports and dashboard views. These reports and graphs provide technical staff with almost instant verification of system status throughout the enterprise. The systems management appliance also supports a range of alerts to notify staff of potential issues and failures.

**Remote control -** The systems management server, in addition to fulfilling remote management functionality, also enables support technicians to take remote control of workstations and systems in order to complete repairs.

**Dedicated training -** Each organization that purchases a KBOX 1100 receives several hours of KBOX JumpStart Training. Online training modules, delivered by KACE Networks representatives or an authorized reseller, cover such topics as security and audit enforcement, help desk services, appliance setup and systems management administration.

**Redundancy -** The KBOX 1100 ships with RAID 1 disk mirroring standard. As a result, organization application data, report settings and other configuration data are automatically replicated to a second hard disk.

**What’s wrong?**

**Cost** - Organization’s must make a significant capital investment when deploying the KBOX 1100. Less expensive alternatives are available, including *Spiceworks* and *HoundDog* Technology for remote monitoring and reporting features and *HyBlue* and others for remote patch management. However, in larger enterprise environments, a fair collection of independent tools and utilities may well be required to match all the seamlessly integrated services packed within the KBOX management center. As organizations grow beyond a few hundred desktops, the KBOX’s pricing and scalability

quickly begin returning favorable economies of scale.

**Competitive Products**

Altiris Endpoint Management

Kaseya IT Department Edition

LANDesk Management Suite

Here's another link to the KBox features.

<http://www.technologyappliances.com/kbox_features.php>