

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

KOCH INDUSTRIES, INC. IMPROVES NETWORK VISIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY RESPONSE WITH CLOUD-BASED ENDPOINT MANAGEMENT & SECURITY SOLUTIONS



BIOGRAPHY

Koch Industries, Inc.

- Ryan Koehn, Sr. Director, Cloud and Application Platforms at Koch Business Solutions, LP
- Gabe Green, Director, Cybersecurity at Koch Business Solutions, LP
- Navin Maharaj, Director at Koch Disruptive Technologies

ABOUT KOCH INDUSTRIES, INC.

The mission of Koch Industries (Koch) is to help people improve their lives by making and innovating products and services its customers value. Koch's focus is on delivering mutual benefit: Win-win outcomes that make life better for its customers and for Koch itself.

Koch's venture investment arm, Koch Disruptive Technologies (KDT), recognized Automox as a disruptive leader in the cybersecurity industry and in February 2020 led a \$30 million Series B investment to accelerate Automox's vision of making corporate endpoint and server infrastructure more resilient to cyberattacks.

KDT seeks out principled entrepreneurs who can receive significant value from interacting with Koch companies and whose technology has the potential to transform Koch's core capabilities, create new capabilities, or expand Koch into new platforms. KDT thrives on being the tip of the spear for innovation at Koch Industries.

"Our legacy patching and endpoint management solution required the deployment of more than 100 different kinds of repositories across the entire network. We had limited visibility of patching and how our endpoints were being deployed and managed. Our Endpoint Operations team was pulling their hair out trying to make it work – we had to find another solution."

Navin Maharaj, Director at KDT

CHALLENGE

Aligning to its mission to deliver “outcomes that make life better,” Koch has been focused on transforming its organization and disrupting how it typically manages business operations. A key part of this initiative has been transforming current processes and adopting new digital technologies that push the boundaries on what’s been done before in order to move Koch’s business into the future. Transitioning its organization to the cloud has been a huge driver for their digital transformation.

As a part of the transition to the cloud, Koch needed to decentralize its network which in turn required them to rethink the company’s network security model. It was struggling with visibility amidst an actively growing corporate footprint and needed a way to easily see what was happening on the expanded infrastructure. Koch chose the cloud-based endpoint security platform, CrowdStrike, because it allowed the company to easily drop the agent on every server or endpoint to know its status.


Similarly, Koch’s legacy patching and endpoint hardening solutions no longer worked with the new network architecture. Again, visibility was the main issue as well as having trouble patching and updating a diverse environment. Koch Business Solutions, LP (KBS) discovered Automox, the cloud-native companion to CrowdStrike that could accommodate its needs and offer the same level of visibility for patching and updating its vastly distributed servers. Recognizing Automox’s unique solutions and what it could offer the Koch enterprise, KBS introduced the Automox team to KDT, whose origination and investment strategy involves identifying technologies that create value for Koch Industries more broadly.

SOLUTION

Adopting the Automox endpoint management solution for its server patching needs was a natural fit for Koch. Having been a CrowdStrike customer, Koch was accustomed to using a SaaS portal to manage endpoints. Because Koch was an actively growing organization, it needed a solution that could easily scale to its growth and allow it to be agile in adding to or patching a diverse environment. As a cloud-based solution, Automox could offer that and more.

Koch also needed a solution that could patch multiple OSes easily. Its legacy solution patched Windows only and it was manually patching its Linux systems – arduous tasks that were not fully optimized. With Automox, they could patch multiple operating systems from the same dashboard. Additionally, Koch needed an automated solution that would allow it to quickly respond to critical updates across the full breadth of its organization. Koch was able to easily deploy Automox’s lightweight agent across its managed servers to ensure access to any and all these devices.

Koch currently uses Automox to patch and manage approximately 8,000 servers. Because the company is widely distributed around the globe and continues to grow its portfolio with new acquisitions, having a SaaS solution like Automox allows Koch to easily deploy the patching solution as it transitions new businesses.



“With over 130,000 employees across 70 countries, we have over 20,000 servers in the enterprise. Many of these servers are manually maintained and patched, which is a Herculean effort. Automox’s SaaS-based solution is a key to simplifying and automating patching for our server portfolio.”


Ryan Koehn, Sr. Director,
Cloud and Application Platforms
at KBS

RESULTS & BENEFITS

After adopting Automox, Koch's Compute Operations team had hours back in their day to focus on other priorities. All told, Koch has realized efficiencies equal to 3,000 hours annually.

With Automox, Koch is able to manage servers from a single point of view and in the future expects to increasingly leverage the flexibility and extensibility of Automox Worklets to keep its servers secure and updated. Automox has allowed Koch to operate in a fully automated way to rapidly deploy out-of-band security patches more quickly than its previous solution could deliver. Plus, Automox is allowing Koch to increase the frequency of patching over its legacy tools.

Using CrowdStrike and Automox together has allowed simplicity in how Koch manages its environments. The two tools together offer the company consistency in how it deploys agents, patches, and updates to third party software. Being able to do this on a broad scale in a fully automated way has been critical in moving its organization towards the future.



“Having visibility on all our endpoints has been a key capability to enable Koch to shift to the cloud and adopt a modern network architecture. Without visibility, you don’t know what and how our endpoints were being deployed and managed. Our Endpoint Operations team was pulling their hair out trying to make it work – we had to find another solution.”

Gabe Green, Director, Cybersecurity at KBS

