



Scotland County Schools

Migrating and Imaging PCs Remotely

Overview

Scotland County Schools, located in south central North Carolina, has 6,600 students and 1,116 faculty and staff spread among 13 schools: nine elementary, three middle and one high. The county, founded in 1899, covers 321 square miles.

Challenge: Reduce Time and Cost of Migrating and Imaging 3,000 PCs

When Rick DeLaunay signed on as Director of Technology and Media for Scotland County Schools, he faced a huge task: overhaul the entire IT system. “When I was hired,” explained DeLaunay, “each school was operating on a separate Novell network with a wide variety—20 different models—of PCs, most of which were fairly old. Our staff of seven worked around the clock just to keep the system running at minimum efficiency. I put together a plan that included tying all the schools together on our high-speed fiber optic backbone, replacing nearly two dozen outdated servers with 12 new quad-quad HP servers, and migrating from Novell to Windows. We were doing everything at once; it was an enormous undertaking.”

Four Months to Migrate PCs Manually

Migrating 3,000 machines manually would have tied up the IT department’s resources for months. “Not to mention travel time, which is considerable,” said DeLaunay, “migrating operating systems by hand is extremely time consuming. I estimate it would have taken five technicians up to seven days to switch out each school. That’s over four month’s worth of work. And then you have to factor in human error. We know we will have to revisit a certain percentage of the PCs to fix issues that did not go right the first time we touched them.”

Duplicating Hard Drives and Maintaining 40 Separate Images

Imaging was just as labor intensive. “We did imaging the old fashioned way with technicians having to visit every school and touch each machine,” said DeLaunay. “It can take up to a day or more just to image 24 PCs. On top of that, we have to maintain 40 separate images: 20 Windows XP images for the 20 different models we own and 20 Windows 7 images. And each time Microsoft publishes a service patch, we have to open up all 40 images, add the patch and recompile each one. It was tedious, never-ending work.”

Solution: Migration and Imaging Now Done Remotely and Automatically

DeLaunay made a deal with the school board. If they approved the funds to implement the new network, he would run it so efficiently that the school district would not only recoup the investment, but also save money each year thereafter. He couldn’t keep his promise without automating the management processes. “We carefully studied the five top system management products on the market,” said DeLaunay. “We chose LANDesk because it’s a one-stop solution, the support is excellent, and we felt it was the best product. Some of the other suites did not include major features such as imaging, which came as a third-party add-on. Also, LANDesk

Profile

School district in North Carolina

Industry

Education

Network

- 3,000 Windows PCs
- 14 Windows servers
- 14 locations

Solutions

- LANDesk® Management Suite
- LANDesk® Patch Manager

Key Benefits

- ROI in 1.3 years
- Saved \$69,360 on network conversion costs
- Continuing annual savings of up to \$200,000
- Optimized IT resources, saving \$112,000 per year
- Two hardware-independent images replace 40 hardware-dependent images

specializes in automated management, whereas that was a side business for other vendors. And while it wasn't the least expensive product it turned out to be the most cost-effective. We saw a fast return on our investment."

Saved \$69,360 in Network Conversion Costs Alone

The LANDesk® solution automated the migration from Novell to Windows, which helped make the wholesale changeover of the system go quickly and smoothly. "We spent five to 10 minutes installing the LANDesk client on each machine," noted DeLaunay. "After that, we walked away and the solution ran a script that automatically migrated the operating system. We completed a school a day versus up to seven days doing it manually, saving up to \$4,080 per school in labor costs for a total of \$69,360 in labor costs. And with a script, we eliminate human error and a second trip to some of the machines. Everything was done correctly the first time."

Two Hardware-Independent Images

Imaging is now done just as fast. "Instead of dealing with 40 different images," said DeLaunay, "we now have two hardware-independent images, one for Windows XP and one for Windows 7 that work on both desktops and laptops. And we can reimage PCs remotely without leaving the office. The process is completed in minutes versus hours and we never have to touch a machine, much less a hard drive. LANDesk not only saved us time and money on the initial conversion of our network, but now that the solution is in place, we will also save time and money on an ongoing basis. Everything—from patching PCs with LANDesk® Patch Manager to inventory and troubleshooting—is now done automatically and remotely from a central location, without punching holes in our firewall."

Results: ROI in 1.3 Years, Then Up to \$200,000 Annual Savings

DeLaunay's deal with the school board paid off. "We did the math and LANDesk will pay for itself in 1.3 years," said DeLaunay. "In the IT world, that's phenomenal. Typically, a payoff in fewer than three years is considered exceptional. We estimate that our continuing savings with LANDesk—the cost of support, travel, imaging, power management and more—will be about \$200,000 a year. Besides the significant savings we achieve with the solution, the biggest benefit to us is that we can now control all of our environment. We were never able to do that before."

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—Rick DeLaunay

Director of Technology and Media
Scotland County Schools

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