



School District of Escambia County

The School District of Escambia County wanted to automate identity management and centralize desktop management to help its small IT staff work more efficiently. With Novell® Identity Manager and Novell ZENworks®, the district reduced user administration time by 75 percent and significantly cut IT travel time and costs.

Overview

One of the largest school districts in Florida, the School District of Escambia County has 40,000 students and 4,500 employees across 60 locations. With a high poverty rate and limited IT budget, the district is constantly focused on using technology to provide its students and staff with the best services possible.

Challenge

With user identities stored in multiple systems, the IT staff at the School District of Escambia County had to manually update each system to keep user information up to date. By integrating these systems and automating identity management, the district could not only reduce administration time, but also increase the accuracy of its user data.

The district's small IT staff was also struggling to manage the district's 12,000 Microsoft* Windows* workstations. Centralized endpoint management would allow the small team to deliver the best technology services as efficiently as possible, without having to hire additional resources.

Solution

The School District of Escambia County evaluated several identity management and

endpoint management solutions before selecting Novell Identity Manager, Novell Storage Manager and Novell ZENworks for identity-based management of its desktops.

"We looked at other products, but have yet to find a more efficient and cost-effective solution than Novell Identity Manager and Novell ZENworks," said Tom Ingram, Coordinator of Technology Services at the School District of Escambia County. "We also selected Novell Storage Manager as our solution for identity-based creation of student digital lockers and classroom storage."

Working with Concensus Consulting, a National Novell Platinum Partner™, the district's IT staff consolidated user information for nearly 45,000 users into a single identity vault. Using Novell Identity Manager, the district can now synchronize user information across multiple systems including HR, student information, online helpdesk, library automation and learning management systems.

"We are working to integrate as many applications as possible with Novell Identity Manager," said Ingram. "Our goal is to give our users easy and secure access to most applications through our Web portal."

School District of Escambia County at a glance:

Large school district in Florida

■ Industry:

Education

■ Location:

United States

■ Products and Services:

Novell Identity Manager

Novell Storage Manager

Novell ZENworks

Novell GroupWise

■ Results:

- *Reduced user administration time by 75 percent*
- *Reduced number of user passwords by 75 percent*
- *Significantly reduced IT travel time and costs*

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Tom Ingram

*Coordinator of Technology Services
School District of Escambia County*



“Because desktop access is based on identity, our students and teachers have consistent access to the applications they need, regardless of the computer they are using. Having seamless access to applications is particularly helpful as students use computers in our classrooms, computer labs and media centers.”

Tom Ingram

Coordinator of Technology Services
School District of Escambia County

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Automatic synchronization of user information eliminates the need for excessive manual updating and allows the IT staff to create new user accounts in minutes. While it used to take the IT staff a month to get through all user account requests at the beginning of each school year, students and staff now have access on the first day of school.

Novell Storage Manager automatically provides users with a home directory or digital locker, based on the user's identity, where students can keep all the important works in an academic portfolio for the duration of their academic career, even when changing schools in the district.

“Concensus Consulting brought the skill set we needed to get our identity management project off the ground and we really benefit from the training and knowledge transfer that comes from our ongoing work with the Concensus team,” said Ingram.

The district has standardized its desktops with Novell ZENworks and uses the ENGL Imaging Toolkit to create desktop images. Using policy management, the IT staff can lock down student computers, while allowing more flexibility for teachers and staff. The IT staff can now quickly respond to user requests for new applications, as well as distribute timely patches and updates to keep its desktops secure.

Using remote control functionality, helpdesk staff can easily access user workstations to troubleshoot issues. If a problem persists, helpdesk staff can re-image a machine in minutes.

The district's 4,500 teachers and staff use Novell GroupWise® for collaboration. BlackBerry® Enterprise Server provides support for the district's mobile users.

“We have looked at other collaboration platforms, but they would all require significantly more hardware and administrators,” said Ingram. “With Novell GroupWise, we don't even need a dedicated administrator—two people can share the part-time responsibility.”

Results

By automating identity management with Novell Identity Manager, the School District of Escambia County has reduced user administration time by 75 percent. The IT staff can now set up a new user account in a day, rather than weeks. With user information synchronized across its systems, the district has reduced the number of passwords users are required to remember by 75 percent.

Novell ZENworks has significantly reduced the IT staff's travel time and costs and freed up more time for planning and testing of new deployments.

“Without Novell solutions and a great integration partner like Concensus Consulting, we would have had to increase headcount to provide the level of services we provide today,” said Ingram. “As a district, we are very focused on controlling costs. Novell technology allows us to provide the most efficient services at the lowest cost.”



Contact your local Novell Solutions Provider, or call Novell at:

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