



Spring Independent School District

Spring Independent School District's recent upgrade to Novell® ZENworks® Configuration Management has created a faster and more stable desktop environment across its 30 locations. The Novell solution has reduced the time spent imaging machines by more than 60 percent and time spent troubleshooting workstations by 50 percent.

Overview

The Spring Independent School District serves more than 35,000 pre-kindergarten through twelfth-grade students in a diverse and growing district located 20 miles north of downtown Houston.

Challenge

The Spring Independent School District's IT department supports nearly 14,000 workstations across more than 35 locations and must continually manage an increasing number of sites and systems. "Our goal is to resolve user issues as quickly as possible, freeing staff to focus on teaching," said James Watson, network manager for the Spring Independent School District. "However, like many educational settings, we operate with a low IT staff-to-student ratio. We needed greater automation and consistency so we could improve resolution response rates and drive down support costs."

The group had already gained considerable benefits from its use of Novell ZENworks to distribute applications and simplify desktop troubleshooting. However, they wanted to bring greater consistency to their environment. "We had successfully used all the capabilities of Novell ZENworks and were excited by the prospects of new functionality

within Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, such as asset management and centralized application creation."

For example, the district had long grappled with managing the 19 different images it needed for each computer model. Reimaging took more than an hour per workstation and required considerable human intervention. "We had a different process and image for each type of Dell* computer we managed," said Edwin Schuessler, application specialist for the Spring Independent School District. "We reimage each workstation every year. With so many disparate images, the process took all summer long. We were always scrambling at the start of the school year to have all the computers ready."

Solution

The Spring Independent School District upgraded to Novell ZENworks Configuration Management to manage its nearly 14,000 Windows* XP systems. "We had been very pleased with our experience using Novell ZENworks and upgrading to Novell ZENworks Configuration Management was a natural transition," said Watson.

The district worked with Identity Automation, a Novell Platinum Partner™, to deploy the

Spring Independent School District at a glance:

Public school district in Houston, Texas

■ Industry:

Education

■ Location:

United States

■ Products and Services:

Novell ZENworks Configuration Management

■ Results:

- Reduced time spent imaging machines by more than 60 percent
- Improved visibility of IT assets to significantly reduce software license and related support costs
- Reduced troubleshooting time and associated support costs by 50 percent
- Accelerated login times by up to 40 percent
- Enhanced security through tighter application deployment controls

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James Watson

Network Manager

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software and customize it to the district's unique requirements. "Working with Identity Automation saved us an incredible amount of time," said Watson. "They have a wealth of knowledge about deploying Novell ZENworks Configuration Management and came up with a strategic plan to support and customize it for our needs."

Leveraging Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, Identity Automation has helped the school district streamline many processes. "We've been able to standardize on just one image, which allows us to maintain consistent desktops across the district," said Schuessler. "Identity Automation automated the entire imaging process by creating a script that automatically identifies the model of computer and pushes the correct drivers and software to that specific machine."

The district also leverages Novell ZENworks Configuration Management to streamline and centralize processes such as application distribution, user management and asset management, which were consuming a great deal of time. The software also makes it easier for the district to secure its desktops. "Previously, managing different user group policies was a tedious process," said Watson. "With Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, we can now remotely apply policies through one central console, preventing students from installing unauthorized software."

Results

Novell ZENworks Configuration Management has helped the district create a more flexible and responsive IT environment, while significantly reducing its overall desktop support costs. "With Novell ZENworks Configuration Management in place, we've improved

workstation stability and security," said Watson. "Our machines are running more smoothly and we've reduced the time we spend troubleshooting workstations by about 50 percent."

By automating and accelerating the district's desktop imaging process, network specialists no longer have to physically touch each workstation. This has reduced the time spent re-imaging its 14,000 desktops each year by more than 60 percent.

The asset management capabilities of Novell ZENworks Configuration Management have also proven valuable. "We've been able to automate many asset management-related tasks which we previously performed manually," said Watson. "Having a central location for generating reports makes it easy to identify which assets aren't being used, which could potentially save us tens of thousands of dollars a year in software licenses and associated support costs."

In addition, the school district's workstations are now performing much faster. "Because Novell ZENworks Configuration Management supports multiple directories, we've reduced the load on eDirectory, which has helped to improve workstation response time," said Watson. "Users can now log in up to 40 percent faster and they have more reliable workstations."

The district is also looking to leverage Novell ZENworks Configuration Management to support its migration from Windows XP to Windows 7. "Using the asset management capabilities of Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, we can quickly identify which workstations are ready to handle the migration to Windows 7," said Watson.



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