

Low-cost computing for education

New Zealand secondary school saves on computer upgrade costs

Challenge

Find a affordable solution for a computer lab upgrade.

Solution

Install NComputing X-series virtual desktops.

Impact

Easily and affordably upgraded computer labs with a solution that requires simpler ongoing maintenance. Utilized savings to fund other critical IT infrastructure projects.

Partner

Driven and supported by AISCORP, a Wellington, New Zealand-based IT solutions provider.

Aotea College is home to 960 local and international students in Porirua City, Wellington, New Zealand. As part of the school's commitment to improving the student learning experience, Aotea has four computer labs that house a total of 120 computers. But when it came time to upgrade the ageing machines, the Aotea IT team found themselves facing a problem.



Aotea students work on the NComputing X-series in their computer labs.

Upgrading fails the test

Not only were the machines old, but the leases on them were also due for renewal, making the upgrade effort a costly one. To add to the frustration, a complete upgrading would mean physically removing and replacing each and every one of the 120 computers. This would put a strain on the IT team's busy schedules. This story is familiar to other schools who, like Aotea, repair, patch, secure, update and monitor large numbers of desktop PCs and laptops with limited staffing.

“Aotea used the money they saved to purchase other products like a storage area network.”

KARTHIK SUBRAMANYAM
SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER
AISCORP

Desktop virtualization makes the grade

Aotea realized that the ideal solution would leverage the substantial investment that they have made in PCs. NComputing reseller AISCORP proposed the NComputing desktop virtualization solution. After seeing a demonstration of how the NComputing solution allows multiple users to share the power of a single computer, the Aotea IT team realized that they had a winning formula.

The NComputing solution is based on a simple fact: today’s computers are so powerful that the vast majority of applications only use a small fraction of their capacity. NComputing’s virtualization software and hardware tap this unused capacity so that multiple users can simultaneously share it. Each user’s monitor, keyboard, and mouse connect to the shared computer through a small and very durable NComputing access device. The access device itself has no CPU, memory, or moving parts so it is rugged, durable, and easy to deploy and maintain.

Aotea chose to install NComputing X-series virtual desktops. The X-series allows up to eleven students to share the power of a single PC at the same time. This allowed Aotea to maximize their investment in PCs by greatly reducing their per-seat cost. And, because maintenance and upgrade costs are proportional to the number of computers, not total seats, the savings continue indefinitely.

Extra credit for the budget

Aotea College saved a significant sum by leveraging the power of PCs with NComputing X-series desktop virtualization kits.

“Aotea College had a fixed budget to spend on purchasing 120 desktops. By using NComputing, they now have 30 PCs plus 90 X-series NComputing virtual desktops (120 workstations in total) for a significantly lesser amount. They used the money they saved to purchase other products like a storage area network,” explained Karthik Subramanyam, Senior Account Manager, AISCORP.

The computer labs are now much more comfortable and usable than they were because the NComputing devices take up less space and generate almost no heat. A typical PC consumes about 110 watts of electricity, but an X-series seat just uses a single watt. And the X-series access device gets its power through the data cable, meaning that there are fewer power cables and outlets needed. Fewer PCs in each lab also means a decrease in noise pollution, making the labs a more conducive learning environment for the students.

