

Low-cost computing for education

Expanding computing access to every classroom

Challenge

Upgrade technology while managing to stay within the school's limited IT budget.

Solution

Deploy NComputing X-series and L-series to enable the school to reduce their IT costs and provide staff and pupils with wider computer access.

Impact

Increased computing and Internet access for staff and students.

Over the last few years, average class numbers at St. Aidan's Primary School in Ireland have grown, and on some occasions have hit 30 pupils. The St. Aidan's staff wanted to introduce teachers and students to the wide array of educational opportunities available via the Internet, but the 16 networked PCs in an isolated computer room could only provide this experience to a limited number of students at any one time.



NComputing L-series deliver computing access in every classroom at St. Aidan's Primary School.

"Pupils are more technology aware than ever before," explained the headteacher of St Aidan's, "and as a result, the demands on the IT resources within the school have increased exponentially. Not only do the children want to learn how to use the PCs, but the teachers also want to use the resources available on the Internet to reinforce the classroom sessions."

Providing even this level of computing resources put a great strain not only on computer room allocations, but also on the PCs themselves. It was clear that the school needed to review the current infrastructure to be able to provide Internet access to the entire school on a daily basis. Like many schools across the country, St. Aidan's had to achieve this within the constraints of a limited IT budget.

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HEADTEACHER
ST. AIDAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

The new age of technology

St. Aidan's original plan was to purchase a PC for each pupil, however the initial outlay costs and the ongoing maintenance prohibited this move. Instead, they looked to NComputing to provide a low-cost, easy-to-maintain solution.

NComputing virtual desktops are ideal for schools and colleges because today's entry-level PCs are so powerful that the vast majority of applications only use a small fraction of the computer's capacity. NComputing's hardware and vSpace™ virtualisation software tap this unused capacity so that it can be simultaneously shared by multiple pupils. Each pupil's monitor, keyboard, and mouse connect to the shared PC through a small and very durable NComputing access device. The access device itself has no CPU, memory, or moving parts—so it's rugged, reliable, and easy to deploy and maintain. By spreading out the cost of the shared computer, schools can provide up to five times the number of stations for the same money.

“The NComputing solution gives us the freedom to add more users when required at a fraction of the cost. Plus, the ongoing maintenance costs have been cut by at least three-quarters just by the nature of the reduced number of PCs that we need to look after,” stated the headteacher at St Aidan's.

Real return on investment

St. Aidan's was able to purchase NComputing-based workstations for less than half the price of the equivalent number of PCs. With this new technology, St. Aidan's is also on its way to becoming environmentally friendly. This highly efficient system requires less electricity, less space, and generates less heat, making it an ideal solution for any classroom seeking to reduce energy bills.

Simple and easy to use

The school's current deployment encompasses both the X-series in the computer room and the L-series in the classrooms. With the help of NComputing, reliable, efficient computer access is a part of everyday schooling for the staff and pupils of St. Aidan's Primary School.

