

Low-cost computing for education.

Huron Elementary goes green, saves green

Challenge

Provide universal student access to e-learning software in a carbon-neutral environment.

Solution

NComputing virtual desktops integrated with LG SmartVine network monitors.

Impact

Awarded carbon-neutral status while providing universal access to key educational software.

Partner

Daytona Storage, a national enterprise solution reseller, provided and deployed the NComputing / LG solution.

California's budget crisis is taking a toll on the state's communities and schools. With 35 classrooms and three computer labs, Huron Elementary School in the state's farm-rich Central Valley exemplifies these challenges. The aging PCs at Huron were unable to run iStation, a recently purchased e-learning software package that provides individualized reading instruction and student benchmarking. Such programs are essential to meeting California reporting requirements, and to ensuring that the school's large population of students with English as a second language get the instruction they need. Additionally, even if the PCs had been able to run the software, Huron didn't have enough of them to for their student population.

There's also an unfortunate side effect of aging PCs: the heat they generate. In California's warm and dry Central Valley, computer labs can run unbearably hot. Old PCs are also noisy and consume a lot of energy. With limited budget and IT staff, "Finding a cost-effective solution was daunting but not impossible," said Stan Dobbs, Assistant Superintendent of Business, who also serves as the district's Chief Technology Officer.



As a result of increased student access to e-learning programs, Huron Elementary is seeing learning improvements.

Daunting technology challenge

"We realized it would take us several years to save the money we needed just to buy the computers for any lab," said Dr. Cecelia Greenberg-English, District Superintendent. "But without new PCs, our investment in the new software would be wasted." As with most schools, the budget for purchasing new PCs is extremely limited, and with a 600:1 ratio of students to IT staff, the task of procuring and deploying any new technology can be daunting.

“LG and NComputing made me a hero!”

ARTURO DURAN
 PRINCIPAL
 HURON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



“In the past, we purchased the newest workstations, but they offered only a short life span of maybe three years before requiring a total replacement,” said Paul Martinez, the district’s Senior Information Technologist. For this refresh cycle, Martinez chose a different type of solution—a combination of LG SmartVine monitors and NComputing virtual desktops, provided by Daytona Storage.

A low-cost solution with simplified installation

NComputing allows many users to share a single PC simultaneously at very low costs and great performance. Each user runs their own applications, just like if they had their own PC. The NComputing solution is based on NComputing vSpace™ desktop virtualization software and high-performance, low-cost client access devices. These devices can be attached to the back of a monitor to save desk space, but Huron went an extra step to make things as simple as possible and used LG SmartVine network monitors, which have the NComputing access device built right in. The NComputing and LG solution simplifies installation and greatly reduces maintenance, IT support, and energy consumption. “We needed to find a solution that the district can afford, and that our IT team can deploy and support without being overwhelmed,” added Ray Zubiri, School Board President. “We also need a flexible solution that increases the number of PC desktops in our classrooms and computer learning labs.”

“The sleek monitors and advanced technology from LG and NComputing make a fantastic addition to the school. Rolling out this technology deployment has been very easy,” said Dr. Greenberg-English.

Going green saves green

With LG SmartVine monitors and NComputing’s desktop virtualization, Huron’s PC labs require only six PCs instead of 36 computers for future replacement—reducing both initial costs and also saving the school from the crippling costs of PC obsolescence. This combination saves time too. “The complete installation at Huron Elementary took just one day. Had we installed standard PCs at all desks, it would have taken the better part of a week, causing access issues for the teachers and students,” said Arturo Duran, Huron’s Principal. “The PC lab environment was immediately more pleasant for learning, with the heat and noise from the old PCs and CRTs eliminated.”

