

Low-cost computing for emerging economies

Mexican Training Center for the Disabled Expands E-learning Access

Hundreds of disadvantaged and disabled citizens who live near Mexico City rely on Centro de Capacitación para el Trabajo Industrial (CECATI) for occupational training. The center teaches marketable skills such as industrial maintenance, secretarial computing, and computer maintenance.



CECATI quadrupled student access to computers by using NComputing.

Working under Mexico's Secretary of Public Education, the school is supported in part by the Partnership for Opportunities for Employment through Technology in the Americas (POETA) to provide on-site training in the use of information technology to persons with disabilities.

Growing Demand Stretches Limited Budgets

E-learning provides exciting new opportunities for learning valuable skills. But even with POETA's support, the budgets at CECATI are tight. The school had previously purchased a few low-cost PCs, but with a student population that increasingly depends on computers, more stations were needed. But the center could not afford them.

The school considered traditional thin clients, but found that they were no great bargain. Worse yet, the thin clients required a higher level of trained support personnel, and CECATI had no IT professionals on staff. School administrators saw that reducing their total cost of ownership (TCO) was the key to meeting their computing needs.

CECATI administrators initially heard about the NComputing solution during a presentation to Mexico's Secretary of Education by LT Solutions, S.A. de C.V., an NComputing solutions partner. Impressed by what they heard, the CECATI administrators asked for a demonstration, so they could see NComputing's potential for themselves.

Quadruple Access, Simplify Support

"We saw the NComputing solution as a perfect fit for CECATI's challenges," said Adrian Medina, education and government sales manager for LT Solutions. "We showed the school's administrative staff how deploying 15 NComputing access devices connected to just 5 standard computers would give them 20 computing stations, while saving them about 60% in initial costs. We also showed them how NComputing would deliver ongoing savings by reducing energy, maintenance, and support costs."

Challenge

Meet growing demand for computer access to support student training programs while lowering costs.

Solution

Deploy the NComputing X-series in order to enable more users to share existing computing resources.

Impact

Quadrupled computing access and significantly reduced support costs.

Partner

LT Solutions S.A. de C.V., an NComputing solutions partner with offices in Mexico City and distributors throughout Mexico.

LT Solutions explained that today's PCs are so powerful that the vast majority of e-learning applications only use a small fraction of the computer's capacity. NComputing's low-cost virtualization software and hardware tap this unused capacity so that it can be simultaneously shared by multiple users, spreading out the cost of the shared PC. Each student's monitor, keyboard, and mouse connect to the shared PC through a small and very durable NComputing access device. The device itself has no CPU, memory, or moving parts so it is rugged, durable, and easy to maintain.

The Future of Educational Computing

"The school saved a substantial amount in installation costs because it took just one hour to set up the entire classroom network," said Mr. Medina. "Even better, their investment will have long-term benefits because NComputing devices have a long useful life."

CECATI immediately realized additional savings as a result of the NComputing deployment. With fewer PCs to maintain, support calls were cut dramatically, as was computer downtime. The classroom was also much cooler as NComputing devices generate no heat. Energy costs went down, too, because NComputing X-series devices use just 1 watt of power compared to 110 watts for a typical computer.

"NComputing has made a huge difference for our students and our school," said Norma Gonzalez, director of CECATI. "We've lowered our costs while meeting student demand for computer access. With the limited IT support we have, reliability of the NComputing devices is also a key factor. The X-series has exceeded all of our expectations. And managing our network has never been easier."

"We plan to deploy the NComputing solution to all of our classrooms and secretarial workstation areas. I firmly believe that NComputing is the future of educational computing," concluded Ms. Gonzalez.

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Norma Gonzalez
Director of CECATI



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