

Success story: Star of the Sea Catholic School

Catholic School Brings Computers to Every Classroom at One-Third the Cost

Challenge

Outdated laptops were slow and unreliable, and teachers were losing confidence in their ability to integrate them into the curriculum.

Solution

With just six host computers connected to NComputing devices, the school powers 66 work stations in a lab and all classrooms.

Results

Adding 14 work stations took just three hours.

To achieve the same number of work stations with traditional hardware would have cost three times as much as with NComputing, saving the school more than \$25,000 just on the initial deployment.

When it's time to refresh equipment, the school only has to upgrade the host computers and peripherals.

NComputing Partner



Unreliable, outdated technology

A star among private schools in British Columbia, Star of the Sea Catholic School nurtures the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of K-7 students. Key to achieving those goals, the school relies on technology to help teach and prepare students for the future.

When Star of the Sea teachers encountered reliability issues with aging laptops, the school knew it was time for an upgrade. Teachers and students could spend up to 15 minutes bringing up laptops, and then experienced spotty network connectivity. Delays significantly cut into educational time and frustrated teachers trying to integrate computers into the curriculum. For the school's IT team and volunteers, that meant near constant troubleshooting.

NComputing passes the test

Star of the Sea chose to pilot NComputing, which uses thin client technology to enable virtual desktops. A single computer can power multiple work stations, reducing cost and maintenance for the private school.

The school found NComputing just in time. When the notebook computers the school uses to support its annual live auction fundraiser began failing, the school quickly implemented an NComputing work station – just three days before the event. Experiencing flawless performance for its event, Star of the Sea chose to deploy five NComputing x550 stations in its computer lab. By day two, students were already rushing to reach the NComputing work stations first, knowing they performed more smoothly.

With success in the lab, the school expanded NComputing L300 units to every classroom. Now, all teachers have at least two computing work stations right in the classroom to support teaching. Impressively, the school has 66 student-facing stations while only having to invest in six host computers or servers.

Saving \$25,000 over traditional hardware

With NComputing, Star of the Sea Catholic School enhanced the educational experience for teachers and students for significantly less maintenance and cost than with traditional computing hardware. Now, teachers can confidently design lesson plans that include technology.

NComputing also completely changes setup and maintenance for the IT team and volunteers.

"NComputing was a win-win for us. It not only significantly reduces capital and operating costs but we consume less electricity and rooms are quieter. The time and money we save gives us the ability to move forward with other new projects."

Paul Griffin
Star of the Sea Parish



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Deployment architecture:

Virtual Desktop Thin Clients:
NComputing L300 and X550

Hosts:
Dell Vostro 470

Windows Server 2008R2, 64bit

Intel® Core™ i7-3770 processor
(3.40GHz with Turbo Boost 2.0
up to 3.90GHz)

Windows Server 2008R2

8GB Dual Channel DDR3
SDRAM at 1600MHz

500GB - 7200RPM, SATA
3.0Gb/s, 16MB Cache

AMD Radeon™ HD 7570 1GB
DDR5

OS virtual machines

Windows Server 2008 R2

Monitors

LG 22" LCD wide screen (in
the lab) and ASUS 17" Square
(in classroom) both with
integrated speakers

Peripherals:

Microsoft Business USB
keyboard and mouse

Applications:

Office 2010, SuccessMaker,
Kurzweil, All the Right Type
and Web-based applications

On average, the school powers 12 work stations with each host computer or server, reducing hardware and software setup dramatically. For example, adding 14 new work stations took less than three hours.

To achieve the same number of work stations with traditional hardware would have cost three times as much as with NComputing, saving the school more than \$25,000 just on the initial deployment. When it's time to refresh equipment, the school only has to upgrade the hosts and peripherals, giving Star of the Sea an ongoing return on its investment in NComputing.

"NComputing was a win-win for us. It not only significantly reduces capital and operating costs but we consume less electricity and rooms are quieter," said Paul Griffin, project lead, Star of the Sea Parish. "The time and money we save gives us the ability to move forward with other new projects."