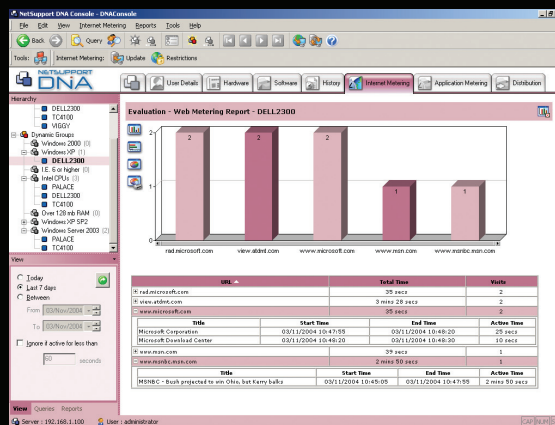


## NETSUPPORT DNA



Title	Start Time	End Time	Active Time
Microsoft Corporation	03/11/2004 10:47:59	03/11/2004 10:48:20	20 sec
Microsoft Download Center	03/11/2004 10:48:20	03/11/2004 10:48:30	10 sec
www.msi.com	25 sec	2	25 sec
www.microware.com	25 sec	2	25 sec
MSNBC - Bush projected to win Ohio, but turns back	03/11/2004 10:48:20	03/11/2004 10:47:59	2 mins 50 sec

There's certainly no lack of choice in the desktop management software market but NetSupport DNA 2 (Dynamic Network Administration) stands out from the mainstream by offering a number of unique features. Along with hardware and software inventory, remote software deployment and helpdesk tools, it also includes Internet and application usage monitoring - features not often seen in competing products.

Targeting small to medium businesses, DNA delivers a smooth installation process that only requires an existing SQL server database to be preinstalled, and smaller sites can use the freely available MSDE 2000. Each client system to be included only requires a single service installed that carries out all inventory and monitoring functions and passes this information back to the database at regular intervals. The database is accessed by a console, which can be installed locally or on another remote system.

The well designed console offers a smart client deployment routine that searches IP address ranges, domains and workgroups and offers to push the software to selected systems and reboot them. The console is split into three sections, with all discovered systems arranged in an Explorer-style tree structure to the left. Each is grouped by domain or workgroup membership, but beneath you can add dynamic groups

where membership is based on hardware or software characteristics, and these are automatically updated as new systems appear or others change their configuration. Below is a panel for accessing reporting tools allowing you to customise views, run queries and pick and choose from the extensive range of predefined Crystal reports.

All the action occurs in the main window, where a neat row of tabbed folders provides swift access to the inventories, Internet and application usage graphs and software distribution. The Internet and application metering components come straight from NetSupport School's distance learning software, and allow you to closely monitor browser activity and software usage. DNA allows passive monitoring to occur but if you want to implement access controls you simply select the application or web site and add them to approved or restricted lists. Application controls can also be extended to selected clients or groups and activated for specific time periods during each day.

If you want helpdesk functions you will need to purchase the NetSupport Manager as an add-on, but rest assured this is one of the best remote control packages on the market. We found inventory accuracy to be particularly good with DNA identifying all hardware components on our test clients and complimenting this with a detailed rundown on installed applications, OS service packs and hot-fixes.

Component and application lists displayed below the graphs can be expanded to show all the systems they are installed on. Inventories can now be customised as DNA allows data to be entered manually, changes highlighted with a new history feature and search facilities for including custom file types in the inventory. To distribute software you create packages of pre-selected files, folders and response actions and either advertise them for installation or push them to selected clients. Inventory data can also be used here to ensure packages go to those clients with the necessary hardware or software configurations.

Larger networks will approve of the new features that allow a local system to be designated as 'distribution warehouses', allowing them to push a remotely downloaded package to all LAN clients so reducing network overheads.

Smaller businesses looking for an easily deployed desktop management solution should place NetSupport DNA 2 high on their list. It is far easier to use than many enterprise-level products and yet provides a range of useful and in some cases unique features and delivers them at a very affordable price. **NC**

**Product:** NetSupport DNA 2.0

**Supplier:** NetSupport Ltd

**Telephone:** 01778 382270

**Website:** www.netsupportsoftware.com

**Price:** 100-249 users - £33:60 each