



Background

Matanuska-Susitna College of Alaska has 150 employees and over 200 PC's.

The Challenge

"One major problem was users' service requests. Service requests come in frequently every day, and being an IT department without a dedicated helpdesk, we needed an effective method for consolidating requests. Before implementing these tools, we had an online form where users could submit support requests which would then be emailed to the IT group. The problem we faced was coordinating the email requests between the technicians. One idea we had for solving such an issue was developing our own custom-built manager software using PHP and MYSQL. However we found this to be very time consuming, costly, and unreliable.

Computer management has been very troublesome. We've tried everything from physical administration of individual desktops to batch files for the entire campus when needed. We also use a program from Faronics called Deepfreeze. Deepfreeze allows us to lock the machine down so no changes from the previous session will be saved once the computer is rebooted. It has proven very useful in lab environments; however, it is not versatile enough for our needs to be a complete management solution.

Software licensing is another large problem. We had no way to monitor and determine if users may have installed applications which could be in breach of licensing agreements. At best we could only assume, estimate, and document areas we were sure of. This left a large paper trail that must then be manually compiled, culminating into dubiously accurate results at best.

One large obstacle we faced while actually implementing NetSupport was the internet metering feature. This feature was not approved of by our Director, due to privacy concerns. We had agreed upon a solution that inconveniences us as technicians, but met his requirements of keeping client internet history private even from IT staff. We have since been successful with the assistance of NetSupport to remove the Internet metering tab. This has been a great help in getting the software implemented across our campus.

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↳ Situation

Our campus is growing, IT-related duties are getting cumbersome given limited staffing, and we needed something to help us manage our systems. We had many individual programs that help us complete individual jobs but nothing that does it all.

We previously used a competing product for our remote control software which allowed us to control computers across the network. We use Faronics DeepFreeze that locks the computers so changes cannot be made to the computers. We used Custom batch files that get the job done but they are rather rudimentary. We used GroupPolicy but that is not always effective as it lacks many advanced features, especially when dealing with non-Microsoft software. NetSupport is being implemented throughout our entire campus both students and staff computers. This totals close to 200-250 clients.

↳ NetSupport Solution

NetSupport has become our single point of administration for client nodes. NetSupport has brought order to our network and we are able to maintain and track users while making the users happy as well due to quicker service. We no longer have to go from computer to computer to do updates and install new software. It is easily pushed out to the clients at their own request! It is still too early to do a TCO analysis; however, we are confident this software has made our systems more manageable, and our job actually possible. We had already been using NetSupport School when we decided to do a full suite installation of NetSupport DNA.

↳ Testimony

"NetSupport has been great and more than willing to help with any questions we have had. They are always very knowledgeable with the aspects of their software and are always willing to escalate any issues that may occur."

- Troy Foster, Net Technician 5, Matanuska-Susitna College

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