

Victor Central School District expands access and improves education through VIRTUALIZATION.

“SMP not only developed more use cases than we could have imagined for this project, but they implemented each one and showed us exactly just how we could do so much more with less. Their understanding of the school environment on top of their expertise with VMware and virtualization in no small way continues to make every stage of our initiative a success.”

David Henderson, Director of Computer Services Victor Central School District

SUMMARY

Victor Central School District refreshes their technology—laptops, desktops, and more—every five years. With budgets tight across New York State, they went in search of a solution that would help bring the district forward in terms of technology, yet fit within their budget and meet their needs. They soon found that desktop virtualization offered the benefits they wanted, but they needed a knowledgeable, dedicated partner who could deliver all of its advantages. With vast experience in VMware View, SMP quickly became the natural choice.

To date, the district has extended the useful life of their laptops by 40% through thin clients, saved significant money on their technology budget, and continues to enrich the education of their students by making educational tools and resources available to them, when and where they want.

VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Located in Western New York, Victor Central School District offer a broad spectrum of programming for students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve. Serving over 4,300 students with nearly 400 teachers and staff, the Victor Central School District curriculum is designed to introduce as well as reinforce concepts for success in the classroom and for life after and beyond school. By providing a variety of instructional styles and placement options, Victor Central School District focus on meeting the unique needs of each student. Along the way, students are prepared to set and meet high standards while gaining the knowledge and personal characteristics needed to become productive well into the future.

On the web: www.victorschools.org

CHALLENGE

Located in Western New York, Victor Central School District serves over 4,300 students in a single shared campus that encompasses Pre-K to High School curricula. The district prides itself on staying ahead of the technology curve, especially when it comes to offering hardware and software that helps engage students and enrich their education. To that end, they refresh technology across their campus on a regular five-year cycle.

The economic downturn of recent years, however, cut deep into their budget. This proved especially problematic when it came to their technology refresh as replacements often couldn't be delayed since some of the technology was very near the end of its usefulness. This was particularly true of district laptops and desktops, which were increasingly slow to start up, had developed connectivity problems, and accounted for some of the district's biggest expenses.

With needed resources scarce the district went looking for a solution that would enable them to maintain their technological edge, while staying within their tight budget. After a thorough investigation, they soon found an ideal pairing for their situation: Virtualization and SMP.

SOLUTION

Virtualization provided an opportunity for the district to simultaneously maximize the use of their existing equipment and offer a host of new benefits to their students and teachers. By repurposing older laptops and desktops and turning them into thin clients, the district could extend the life of the equipment they already had, simplify IT management, and improve computer access for teachers, students, and staff—all while supporting new learning approaches.

After considerable investigation, the district decided that VMware View offered the virtualization solution that was right for them. When it came to VMware expertise in upstate New York, it quickly became clear that SMP was the go-to partner for this task.

Working together with the district and consulting with VMware, SMP outlined a methodical, staged approach to virtualizing laptops and desktops across campus. During this process, SMP identified multiple new use cases that the district had not even considered, detailed the benefits they would provide, and demonstrated how each one could be rolled out within the original budget of their initiative.

The initial proof-of-concept was tested on 30 desktops in the high school library. From the very first day, machines that had once taken 10-15 minutes to fully boot up were now ready in a couple minutes, and included a host of new, up-to-date applications for students to use.

The project quickly went ahead and 300 desktops were virtualized—from laptop carts used in classrooms to computers used by staff and teachers. The implementation went so smoothly that the target was escalated to 500 desktops and SMP completed this expanded goal well ahead of time.

RESULTS

The district has been thrilled with the project from start to finish. Not only did they extend the useful life of their laptops and desktops by 40%—and made them significantly more responsive and useful—they were able to shift their technology budget to invest in new initiatives with the generated savings.

Just as telling, help desk tickets dropped by 30% in a little over a year—and only two out of the 900 tickets issued in that time were for the district's new thin clients. The turnkey nature of virtualization also streamlined IT management as fewer individual upgrades were needed per computer, freeing up staff to focus on other pressing projects.

Most important though, the solution has enabled teachers, staff, and students to have computer access anytime, anywhere and on any device. Virtualization gave students 24/7 remote access via online login to applications they might not have on their home computers. For teachers and staff, work could be done just as easily from home as in school, including remotely helping students with projects after school hours and opening up new learning approaches at every student level.

To date, the district continues to expand their solution and have already moved ahead with the deployment of 700 virtual desktops and laptops, with many more scheduled.

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