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DameWare™ Mini Remote Control Software Allows Illinois School District to Achieve Remote Administration of IT Systems

Jacksonville School District 117 ("Jacksonville") in Jacksonville, Illinois is a large, geographically dispersed school district spread throughout nine locations – a high school, junior high, six elementary schools, and an administration building. The district's IT department works from a central location and is responsible for supporting users in all buildings. When end users in any location need support, Jacksonville's IT department requires a quick and simple way to provide effective resolutions for them in real time.

CLIENT STATISTICS

3,600 students

9 locations from K-12

6 users rely on DameWare MRC

IT Management Challenge

Nick Guidish is the network administrator at Jacksonville and originally used the built-in Windows® XP remote systems access because his school district's budget was tight. However, he found that trying to set up the system without user interaction was complicated and unreliable. He elected not to utilize RDP either because it would blank out the end user.

Guidish also said the wide dispersion of schools required personal visits to troubleshoot each of their problems. With schools as far as 13 miles from their office, Guidish's department was spending a significant amount of time commuting that they could have used to solve IT problems.

"We get a lot of urgent calls and now we're able to help the end users right away," Guidish said. "It has been a big time and money saver for us – it's very inexpensive. With the time you would travel to sites in a month or two, you can easily save the cost of the license."

Solution

Guidish found DameWare Mini Remote Control (MRC) listed as a readers' favorite remote administration tool on WindowsNetworking.com and downloaded a trial version. He found that it had the features he needed to simplify the department's efforts to manage the school district's IT systems.

"We use it as much as we can for anything that doesn't rely on an onsite presence," he said. "Our farthest school is about 13 miles away from us. So by the time you pack up your stuff and travel, you are taking about 20 to 30 minutes out of your day. With MRC, you are saving time, mileage, and frustration for the end user because they aren't waiting for you."

Then I'll show my mouse as a dot on his desktop
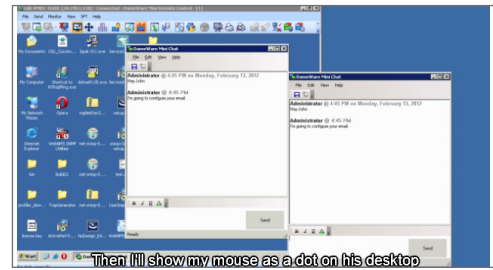
Results

Guidish's first impression of DameWare MRC was that it offered a clean interface and easy usability. In fact, Guidish says the whole department relies on DameWare daily for remote desktop support – including the department secretary.

"I've never had to pick up the manual," Guidish said. "I didn't know how DameWare would work, but it was clear just how easy it was to get started. It was very simple."

Guidish said DameWare MRC has absolutely been the right choice for Jacksonville and has changed the way the department operates. Now, they react remotely first rather than traveling to the problem site.

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Guidish said the department receives an abundance of "urgent calls," in which the end users require immediate attention, and with DameWare MRC, the department can now assist users right away.

"One situation is when you have a speaker whose presentation was supposed to start 10 minutes ago and they call you and you're 10 minutes away," he said. "If the tech had to drive there, the audience would be waiting for an already past due presentation to start. But now you can log in and fix it right away."

Guidish said the Jacksonville IT department as a whole is more productive with DameWare MRC.

"If you spend an hour or more traveling and then you can save that and put that hour back in your day, that's more time you have to be productive," he said. "DameWare Mini Remote Control just works. It gets the job done."

Among Guidish's favorite features are DameWare MRC's speed, its ability to create bookmarks, and its multi-monitor support, all of which worked for him right out of the box. Still, Guidish said choosing his favorite feature is simple – it's simplicity.

"The general ease-of-use is the best feature," he said.

IT Management
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