

FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION - MANITOBA, CANADA

CHALLENGE *A SUPPORT TEAM SPREAD THIN*

Frontier School Division (FSD) in Manitoba, Canada, supports a total of 41 schools - most located anywhere from 100 to 600 miles from the nearest office.

The sheer geography of a dispersed school district imposes a unique challenge to the FSD support team, as frequent onsite visits amounted to significant travel costs by land and air. Consisting of only 7 network administrators supporting over 3,500 computers - a ratio of about 500 computers per administrator - the FSD team is spread very thin.

The combination of an understaffed IT support team - in relation to the number of computers supported - and the vast distances between sites meant some schools had to wait up to 3 months before the support team could resolve their issue. "With only a few admins taking care of up to 50 different sites and with schools being so far from their central offices, we needed a solution that would help us reduce our time to resolution and extend our IT reach across our school district," explained Andrew Single, Divisional Network Administrator.

SOLUTION

Having found Goverlan while researching remote administration tools on the internet at a previous employer, Single found it a superior alternative to the Novell Zenworks solution that was in place at FSD. "Our old tools were cumbersome...moving to Windows we also needed to find a solution that was compatible," he explained.

The FSD support team found the Goverlan installation and implementation fast and effortless; "Click 'Next' three times and you're finished!" The Goverlan agents are also automatically maintained, so the team could get right to work without deploying agents on each client machine.

RESULTS *FSD IMPROVES TIME-TO-RESOLUTION & CALLS HANDLED*

"With Goverlan, we have been able to dramatically improve our time to resolution and the number of issues handled. Now we can perform tasks such as software installs or printer/driver installations in the same week, sometimes in the same day; before Goverlan, schools would have had to wait months for some tasks," said Single.

The FSD support team now uses Goverlan's remote control capabilities for its daily tasks in supporting schools scattered throughout the entire province of Manitoba. "We use the remote control extensively for manual software installs and for end-user support." Frequently-performed tasks are made even easier with Goverlan's fluid access to a remote machine's components via a user-friendly drill-down menu. "We find the access to software products, drive information, and printers very useful. Often, it's a lot quicker to install a new printer by simply opening the printers section rather than having to remote control a client's machine and setting it up from the printers folders," the team added.

Although onsite visits are still necessary to resolve some issues, with Goverlan most tasks can now be performed remotely, greatly extending the capabilities of a single administrator to support a large number of network machines. "This year we managed to get 15 sites connected to the same Active Directory forest; I can sit in my office from the Goverlan console and perform the work of anywhere from 15-20 schools without having to remote into the server manually," explained Single.

The FSD support team was impressed with the speed and ease at which Goverlan can detect and connect to machines in order to get to the root of problems more efficiently as well as with its seamless integration with Active Directory which makes it very intuitive to use. "With Goverlan, it's as simple as 'I know this machine, connect to it now.' It's not just a remote control product, you're tied into the Active Directory; I can go to a user by the username, see which machines they're logged into, and go directly into remote



FSD'S CHALLENGE

- 7 admins support 3,500+ machines, a 1 to 500 admin-to-computer ratio
- Supports school district spread across Manitoba; 50 sites (41 schools, 5 offices, 4 outbuildings)
- 5 main offices, schools typically distanced 100-600 miles

GOVERLAN'S SOLUTION

- Time-to-resolution reduced from 1-3 months to less than 1 week
- Dramatically reduced travel costs from onsite visits
- Increased call efficiency
- Increased number of issues handled

"With Goverlan it's as simple as 'I know this machine, connect to it now.' I can go to a user by the user name, see which machines they're logged into, and go directly into remote control and admin tasks."

- FSD Support Team

control and other admin tasks. It's the integration of Goverlan that puts it ahead," said the FSD support team.

When asked what the team finds most useful about the Goverlan GUI, Single noted; "What I like most about Goverlan's GUI is the way that it is tied into your Active Directory because you're already used to your own organization; it's already there within Goverlan, like it just bolts straight onto AD. This is what AD should have been, you guys just extended things very nicely."

Other Goverlan features that have proved indispensable to the FSD team are its interface, which allows for remote viewing of the screen activity and performance counters of many machines within a single easy-to-view window, and full support of multi-monitor configurations. "Because we have so many multi-monitor set-ups now, I couldn't use remote access software without it," added Single.

Single also commented on Goverlan's minimal learning curve and high stability. "I can't comment on the quality of [Goverlan's] technical support, simply because I've never needed it. The product is stable and very straight-forward to use."

CONCLUSION

Having helped the FSD support team dramatically decrease expensive onsite visits and increase time-to-resolution from months to less than a week, Goverlan has become an essential component in supporting Frontier School Division's mission of providing high quality education to students in Manitoba, Canada.

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- FSD Support Team

"Goverlan's GUI ties into your Active Directory seamlessly, which makes navigating and performing tasks very intuitive because you're already used to your own organization."

- FSD Support Team

ABOUT FRONTIER SCHOOL DIVISION

Frontier School Division, located in Manitoba, Canada, consists of 41 schools spread across the entire province. FSD's commitment to providing high quality education through the efforts of all staff members, both teaching and support, provides students with positive futures for themselves and their communities. www.frontiersd.mb.ca

ABOUT PJ TECHNOLOGIES

PJ Technologies, the creators of Goverlan®, is a leading provider of systems management software. PJ Technologies' solutions are entirely implemented and managed from within the client's infrastructure, thereby fostering security, integrity and control. www.goverlan.com