

# Jeff Joseph – case study



## Background

Jeff Joseph Sale Moor Technology College, based in Sale, Cheshire, is a leading Technology College with over 1000 students. Previously named the Sale Moor School, it was renamed in 1994 as part of a government initiative to promote technology. The name derives from the mentor of the main sponsor of the school, Sir David Alliance.

The college offers the full National Curriculum but with a strong emphasis on the use of information technology across the curriculum. All students take either double science or a GNVQ in science. Similarly all students take a full design and technology GCSE. A measure of the college's success is that for the last six years it has been oversubscribed.

Located in the college is a Learndirect Access Point offering a wide range of computer and skills for life training courses for local adults, aged 19 or over. Since it was set up 3 years ago, over 300 people have taken advantage of its facilities to complete a course.

## Challenge

Being a Technology college, the utilisation of IT is important both in the teaching of the wider National Curriculum and in the more specific IT related subjects. Over the years Jeff Joseph has invested in 300 desktop PC's to meet the needs of the school and the requirements of the Learndirect centre.

Due to the requirement to centrally manage, support and develop a growing IT infrastructure these desktop PC's were installed on a server based platform. In addition a Citrix MetaFrame solution was implemented to provide efficient access to applications and data across the network.

**Citrix MetaFrame is a single, integrated and consistent access infrastructure that:**

- Provides secure, easy and instant access to applications and information
- Enables IT staff to manage a diverse environment by enabling the centralised management of applications, simplifying their deployment, monitoring and measurement
- Ensures only the right people have access to the right resources to protect the security of data and applications

**During early 2003 a number of issues were highlighted relating to the performance of the IT infrastructure. In particular users were experiencing:**

- Unusually slow log-ons
- Session disconnections
- Inconsistency of application availability
- Server crashes
- Domain issues
- Applications not working
- Some IT rooms in the school not being able to connect to the Citrix servers
- Other networking issues

## Solution

In the Spring of 2003 Jeff Joseph's Head of IT, Pete Mercer, invited Novus Networks into the college to discuss the performance issues relating to the existing IT infrastructure.

After a thorough analysis of the problems Novus recommended a system health check. This would enable them to comprehensively document the current state of the Citrix MetaFrame infrastructure and audit the existing Windows 2000 domain. They would then be in a position to be able to make recommendations that would improve both the Citrix MetaFrame installation and the Windows 2000 domain.

**As a result of this health check and further issues that arose during the summer, Novus recommended rebuilding the Windows 2000 domain structure and the six Citrix MetaFrame application servers. This work was carried out during December 2003 and included the implementation of:**

- Citrix MetaFrame XP on Windows 2000 Terminal Servers for 300 concurrent users
- Citrix Secure Gateway and Web Interface to enable access for remote users
- Windows 2000 Active Directory, ISA and File/Print Servers
- Trend Micro Client Server Suite Anti-Virus software
- Appsense Performance Suite software on the Citrix MetaFrame servers
- SurfControl software
- Application deployment to a local primary school

## Benefits

Implementation of the new system solved all the previous performance issues and also provided a number of other significant benefits.

With Internet use now central to the learning experience of students, the college was being increasingly exposed to virus and Trojan infection and being severely inconvenienced by the resulting disruption and downtime that follows. To ensure the network was protected from viruses, worms and other types of infection, Novus recommended that Jeff Joseph implement Trend Micros Client Server Suite Anti-Virus solution across all desktops and servers. This provides centralised administration for anti-virus protection and centralised deployment of new anti-virus pattern file updates.

**SurfControl was also added to the infrastructure to provide both pupils and staff with a flexible, scalable and secure Web content security solution. It also provides the IT support team with a solution that improves the manageability of the network by allowing for:**

- Filtering by global rules or rules specific to a user or group
- Customised filtering by category, site, directory, or page
- Managed Web access by time of day, time online, bandwidth or megabytes allocated
- The provision of instant e-mail notifications when filtering rules are triggered.

Appsense was installed onto the Citrix MetaFrame servers to provide further protection and stability for the network. Appsense ensures that users cannot save unauthorised applications (such as games) and data onto the servers, jeopardising their stability. It also prevents users from changing their settings and accessing unauthorised data and applications. Additionally it also provides optimum performance and allows each Citrix MetaFrame server to handle a greater number of users.

**Pete Mercer, Head of IT at Jeff Joseph, commented:**

*"We have been impressed with the professionalism and expertise of Novus from our first meeting. They have enabled us to upgrade and overhaul our IT infrastructure to remove the performance issues we were previously suffering and provide us with a platform that will allow us to meet the future requirements of the college.*

*Novus have provided us with the onsite consultancy and implementation to upgrade our infrastructure together with the necessary training, and will continue to provide support for us on an on-going basis."*

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