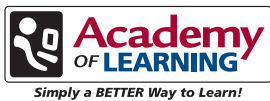


Small Business Case Study

Server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology, desktop computers with Intel® Pentium® 4 processor technology, notebook with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology
Company Size: 1-25 employees



Academy of Learning gives Intel straight A's

Case Summary

The Academy of Learning, Winnipeg North, teaches students the skills needed to find jobs in their chosen fields. When the current owners purchased the college five years ago, students worked on stand-alone computers and couldn't learn the technology they would be using in the workforce. The Academy of Learning, Winnipeg North, knew that to make the grade with its students, newer technologies were needed at the desktop and network levels.

Challenge

The Academy of Learning is a computer and career college that provides its students with access to more than 150 courses and diploma programs. The college teaches students, across Winnipeg, skills development courses in business or computers, as well as a range of diploma programs such as accounting, business administration, graphic design and information technology.

When Terry Taylor, director and owner of the Academy of Learning, Winnipeg North, purchased the business five years ago, students entering the college would sit at one of 50 stand-alone PCs to do their course work. For advanced IT programs, some elements would need to be simulated because the college didn't have the newer software or network elements needed for hands-on learning. In addition, students needed to constantly save work to floppy disks, which could easily get damaged and cause them to lose their work.

For Taylor, this had to change. He knew that students needed more advanced technology to succeed in their chosen fields, and recognized that the stand-alone desktop environment would be time intensive to maintain. The disjointed group of computers also prevented exchanging of files, centralized printing and even something as simple as shared calendars.



"I was really tired of looking at little pink appointment notes," said Taylor, adding they tell their students about business programs like Microsoft Exchange*, but without the programs in-house, they couldn't teach students how to use them.

Solutions

"We want to make sure we are more technically up to date," says Taylor. "Some of our courses cover Microsoft Exchange*, but students couldn't experience the software because the school didn't have any licences. Now students can set up tasks or appointments and experience the software, like they would in an office environment. It's a better learning experience which prepares them for the workplace."

As a first step, Taylor increased the computers on their educational floor to 75, and added another three more desktop computers to the Computer-Assisted Design area of the college. Using desktop computers with Intel processor technology, Taylor was able to cost-effectively extend the number of seats available at the school, while boosting the processing power available to many of the students.

At the same time, he moved to a centralized network infrastructure that relied on a new server with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology to handle authentication, file sharing, printing, Web services and administration support. He also hired Craig Legary as an administrator to manage this network.

The Academy of Learning, Winnipeg North, is making Intel processor technology the standard for its new purchases. Taylor's previous business experience demonstrated the robust reliability of Intel processors.

"I was able to get a very good price on the server, but the price was only part of the consideration; reliability was critical," he said. The choice was easy.

Key Advantages

Every day, there are 50 students, on average, accessing files, downloading media content, editing video feeds, as well as accessing the Internet and printing assignments. Ensuring reliable access to the Internet, as well as a centralized back-up and repository for homework assignments and course information was a key element in bringing the college up to current technological standards.

"With the new server, students are able to access information much faster than in the past," says Taylor, who notes placement of his students in their chosen field has gone up from 79% five years ago to 86% last year. He attributes the increase to the new technology they've brought in.

And the business benefits have been tangible. Taylor estimates business grew 26% last year and is projecting a further 13% growth this year.

"With the new server, students are able to access information much faster than in the past."



"We are a totally different school than we were five years ago, which has improved our performance, our image and our business," says Taylor. "Technology has done that for us."

Homework Streams Through Server

With the security of having all student data backed up, the centralized server at the Academy of Learning, Winnipeg North, no longer has to fuss with floppy discs and CD-ROMs. It also allows the school to better manage the processor loads being placed on their network by the students. Legary says the server load with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology never exceeds 60%, "which is well within acceptable margins and doesn't tax the system for too long."

"With students accessing the network, streaming video files and downloading audio files, there's a lot going through our servers at a given time," he said, adding that the server also supports 12 administrative staff.

Since there can be upwards of 50 students on the network trying to complete their assignments, they need to quickly access their course data. The server also has to manage the students' printing needs, which reach as many as 700 pages a day.

For Legary, standardizing on Intel processors reduces administrative headaches. "Intel processors are more durable and it's the durability I like. In a business environment, Intel is more technician-friendly. It does exactly what it should be doing, every time," he said, adding that their server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology can be easily expanded to increase processing capacity or hard drive space.

"We've changed from having older software and hardware to being right up to date," says Taylor. "We want to make sure when we send a student out into the workforce, they are familiar with the most recent software solutions."

The change from stand-alone computers to a full network server environment increases the speed with which programs load. Plus the IT students get to see how quickly programs can be installed, and how even operating systems can be easily changed to meet specialized program needs.

Hyper-Threading Streamlines Workload

When choosing a desktop for himself, Legary selected a desktop computer with Intel® Pentium® 4 with Hyper-Threading Technology (HT Technology). As a power user who works with design software, remote server sessions, sound and photo editing, as well as e-mail, Legary's CPU usage often spikes to over 80%. In the past, he would have to shut down applications to open new programs. With HT technology, Legary has effective software streaming, allowing him to keep all of the programs running simultaneously.

"It's much more efficient. I'm not taxing the system anymore," he says.

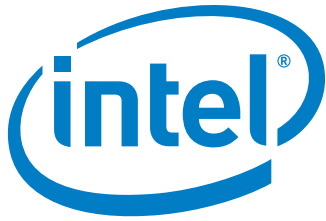
Mobility Gets Bonus Points

For IT students, learning about wireless networks is a critical experience in today's business environment. "We train to be technicians here and wireless is getting to be bigger than hardwired environment," says Taylor, "It's easier to work with, and the best way to teach our students about wireless is to have it here."

An added benefit of the wireless LAN at the Academy of Learning is that guest professors can easily connect to the Internet, access their files and do their presentations. "It's a perk that we have it," says Legary.

Taylor also takes advantage of the mobility of the wireless network. Using his notebook with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, Taylor can move about the school and remain connected. With longer battery life and easier connection to the Internet, Taylor loves the convenience of wireless and his Intel® processor.

"I wanted Intel built-in. I am an Intel man. I wanted this notebook because it is better on battery life and had all the features I wanted, including wide screen. It's a great notebook."



Future Uses

With future growth projected to continue, Legary and Taylor are already looking to add enhanced technology to the school. They are currently looking to create a new Web site, as well as providing students with remote access so they can work from home during emergencies.

In addition, the school is investigating the costs of bringing a laptop program into the school for its technical students.

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