

Using Ivanti across Citrix, Desktops, and Notebooks for 8,000 Users



Company:

BC School District 67

Industry:

Education

Solutions:

- Ivanti Application Manager and Ivanti Performance Manager solutions, powered by AppSense, were deployed to secure the environment proactively and improve system performance.
- Ivanti Environment Manager, powered by AppSense, was deployed later to all desktops to provide a suitable lock-down functionality without compromising user capability.

Benefits:

- Prevents all unauthorized applications
- Achieves high levels of security while improving end-user productivity
- Decreases client re-imaging to once a year
- Secures and simplifies applications through lock-down capabilities
- Centralizes security management for terminal servers, desktops, and laptops
- Improves resource utilization to support more users per server
- Enhances Citrix server and desktop performance
- Decreases overall IT support costs

A technology pioneer, British Columbia School District 67 (Okanagan Skaha), is the province's only district with a centralized fiber optic network, which it shares with the City of Penticon. The IT department services 7,500 students and 800 staff across three high schools, four middle schools, and 10 elementary schools.

Ensuring a High Level of Security without Compromising Productivity

School District 67 supports 2,000 desktops, 14 Citrix servers, and 300 laptops. Ensuring security, stability, and performance in such a diverse environment—particularly when so many of its users are tech-savvy students—proved to be a tremendous challenge. With thousands of students, IT is just as worried about security breaches coming from inside the firewall as outside. Often, IT must provide users with administrative rights in order to run required software. However, this is the quickest way to expose networks to potential threats.

Running Unauthorized Applications

In the past, spyware, adware, and other malware could easily run on any terminal server or desktop client. When spyware ran, it would consume extra resources, slowing response times. To remove spyware and restore integrity, stability, and performance, IT would have to re-image machines every single month.

Exposure of Sensitive Information

Students and teachers often share computers. In several instances, students installed keyloggers on computers right before teachers logged on, enabling them to capture the teachers' keystrokes. As these were unknown custom applications, reactive measures such as antivirus and application blacklists were unable to provide protection. The IT department knew it needed to take extra precautions, but didn't want to restrict students from using USB devices that

they had come to rely on. At the same time, IT didn't want to expose their machines or network to malicious code downloaded from USB devices. IT either had to lock out USB devices completely or allow them to be used by everyone.

Desktop Management

The IT department had to manage policy and personalization on its Citrix thin client, desktop, and laptop environments separately. There was no central way to administer policies, manage profiles, or provide fixes. This reactive method to desktop management proved to be very time consuming.

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— **Danny Francisco**
IT Manager, BC School District 67

User Load and CPU Limits

The School District wanted to optimize its thin-client servers by increasing user load without impacting quality of service. In addition, several critical applications consumed 100% CPU—resulting in significant performance hits, increased support calls, and higher overall management costs. IT needed to control CPU consumption, ensure reliable performance, and keep help desk calls down.

Flexible, Granular System Protection Enhances User Productivity

BC School District needed a solution that eliminated the threat of malware and user-introduced applications, maintained productivity, and optimized network performance. It turned to Ivanti Application Manager and Ivanti Performance Manager to:

Balance security with end-user productivity

IT does not choke off end-user productivity. In fact, it enables users to work even more productively

Centralize management for Citrix servers, desktops, and laptops

The ability of Ivanti to work easily across all client-delivery mechanisms is a tremendous advantage. For instance,

Microsoft's built-in software restriction policies and drive mappings require a lot of administration. Ivanti uses intuitive rules and memberships to deploy settings to all clients under one unified interface, making it highly scalable. It's a perfect solution for the district's 300 laptops because its security settings are cached locally, making them easier to enforce. What's more, laptops always get the newest policies when they reconnect.

"Ivanti enables us to easily manage a total, end-to-end solution. It's a lot more customizable and granular than the built-in Microsoft capabilities. Ivanti takes management to the next level," said Danny Francisco, IT Manager.

Enhance Citrix performance

School District 67 uses Ivanti Performance Manager in its Citrix environment to increase user load per server and control the amount of CPU used by processor-intensive applications, resulting in a more stable, well-performing Citrix build and improved user density.

Deploy USB device control

Ivanti enables IT to restrict applications on USB drives, which is critical. "We don't want to lock out the convenience of users storing data on their thumb drives," said Francisco, "but we don't want them to put malicious code onto the network. With Ivanti, they can use USB devices, but we can also control what they can execute."

Aid teacher productivity through self-authorization

With Ivanti's self-authorization capabilities, the system notifies teachers automatically prior to running something out of policy or unsanctioned by IT and asks them if they want to continue running it. As a result, teachers don't wait to obtain access to applications they need, but they also realize their actions are out of policy area and are monitored. If they're unsure, self-authorization gives them pause to check with IT before executing. "Before it was full control or no control, said Francisco. "Ivanti bridges that critical gap."

How It Works

BC School District 67 started using Ivanti Performance Manager and Ivanti Application Manager in its Citrix environment. It then implemented Ivanti solutions across its desktops and laptops, using the single Ivanti management console to control all desktops, regardless of how they are delivered to the user.

Moving Forward

The School District is implementing Ivanti Environment Manager primarily for locking down the user interface. However, it plans to leverage even more of the solution's rich features in the coming months.

“It’s a really exciting product; it’s a goldmine in itself,” Francisco said. Ivanti Environment Manager will enable IT to manage and control what users can see and do on the School District’s systems, such as which applications they see, when they log on, their interactions with critical files such as registry keys, or other processes or services. This will reduce the possibility of corruption even further.

Eliminate Internal Breaches

Ivanti eliminated the chances of unintentional—and intentional—breaches from within and outside the firewall. “Even when students try to circumvent security policies they don’t succeed because Ivanti security is so deep and granular,” said Francisco. “Only authorized applications can run. Instead of ongoing re-imaging for security purposes, IT only re-images once a year for maintenance.”

Technical Overview

The BC School District 67 infrastructure consists of 14 Citrix servers, all of which are HP enterprise-class servers. In addition, the District has 2,000 desktops and 300 HP tablets. All of the District’s Citrix-based desktop and laptop applications are protected and enhanced with Ivanti solutions.

- Ivanti Application Manager
- Ivanti Environment Manager
- Ivanti Performance Manager



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