



Customer Story

Education Industry

Education

The King's School facilitates 21st century learning with Ericom and thin clients



“Year on year, we have to try to make real savings in the IT department to allow the school to invest in the new applications that will support teaching and learning. By helping us to keep our IT maintenance and running costs down, PowerTerm WebConnect is helping us to achieve this goal.”

Paul Dewick
Network and IT Manager
The King's School, Grantham



Information Technology (IT) is an absolutely critical part of the 21st century learning agenda. Almost every subject taught at secondary school level in the UK now has an IT component. As a result, schools have a responsibility to provide sufficient computers for their pupils to learn new skills and put them into practice in classroom learning, homework and assessments. But for most schools, the cost and complexity of providing and maintaining this IT equipment is a heavy burden.

Based in Grantham, The King's School has succeeded in both cutting its IT costs and reducing the strain on its internal IT team. At the same time, it has increased the quality and quantity of IT resources available to pupils. The school implemented PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView from Ericom and gained return on its investment in one year.

INDUSTRY

Education – Secondary

CUSTOMER

The King's School, a state grammar school in Grantham, Lincolnshire

PRODUCT

Ericom® PowerTerm® WebConnect RemoteView

CHALLENGES

- Equip four new computer rooms for pupils
- Reduce the ongoing cost of IT ownership
- Make it easier for the school to manage its growing IT infrastructure

SOLUTIONS

- Install thin clients in place of desktop PCs
- Deploy Ericom's PowerTerm WebConnect Remote View for centralised application delivery
- Configure applications and manage the network remotely

BENEFITS

- Reduced annual power and air conditioning costs by £7,500
- Additional budget available for new applications and software upgrades for pupil use
- More efficient network and desktop management
- Greater security, as pupils cannot access core computer settings

“Ericom’s Solution did everything we needed and cost considerably less”

Established in 1329, The King’s School in Grantham is one of the oldest schools in the country. It caters for boys between the ages of eleven and seventeen and counts prominent historical figures like Sir Isaac Newton among its former pupils. The school still believes firmly in the importance of traditional values such as honesty and respect – but when it comes to the curriculum, its teaching facilities need to be right up to date.

When The King’s School constructed a new building on its campus to cater for expanding pupil numbers, it had to invest in new computing facilities. It designated four rooms in the new block as IT rooms and needed to equip them cost effectively. “We had a requirement to be as green as possible and to minimise the total cost of IT ownership,” explains Paul Dewick, network and IT manager at The King’s School. “The easiest way for us to achieve these goals was to use thin clients instead of PCs wherever possible.”

AN ENTIRELY NEW APPROACH

Paul Dewick had experience of deploying and managing a thin client network from a previous job, but this type of network infrastructure represented an entirely new approach to IT for The King’s School. He recalls: “For this approach to work, I knew that I would have to find a management solution that was affordable for the school and easy for pupils to use.”

This management solution had to be able to deliver a variety of software applications over thin clients including Microsoft Office solutions, Macromedia DreamWeaver for web design work, PhotoShop Elements for image manipulation and programming tools for Java PHP and C++ development environments. The school also needed to be able to protect the equipment properly with security and monitoring software. Above all, the school’s small IT team had to be able to manage and

maintain the software and network as efficiently as possible.

The King’s School contacted Northarbour, an Ericom Gold partner and specialist provider of IT solutions for educational establishments. With this firm’s help, the school evaluated Ericom® PowerTerm® WebConnect RemoteView and a similar solution from Citrix. PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView is a server-based computing solution that provides flexible and secure access to applications via thin clients and personal computers (PCs). This solution proved to be precisely what The King’s School was looking for. “Ericom’s PowerTerm WebConnect solution did everything that we wanted and cost considerably less than Citrix’s solution,” says Dewick.

A SIMPLE MANAGEMENT CONSOLE

The King’s School implemented PowerTerm WebConnect with help from Northarbour and rolled out

applications to 120 thin clients in four new computer rooms. The whole process was completed with very little effort, and the new system was up and running in just four hours.

Because PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView is centrally managed, it enables companies to reduce IT complexity and desktop management costs. This is an important benefit for The King’s School, because — like most schools — it only has a small IT team. Using the solution, the team can work much more efficiently to ensure optimum IT performance.

When new software becomes available, the IT team at The King’s School can install the upgrade centrally and then make it available to all desktops instantly at the push of a button. “PowerTerm WebConnect has a simple management console that makes it very easy for us to use and saves a lot of time,” says Dewick.

Another key advantage of using PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView is that pupils cannot access and alter any of the core system settings. “Boys like fiddling with things and can quite easily mess computers up without necessarily intending to be malicious,” says Dewick based on experience! “With thin clients, they can’t do this. The use of PowerTerm WebConnect makes our systems very secure.”

A REDUCTION IN OPERATING COSTS

By using thin clients instead of PCs on each desktop, the school has calculated that it saves 300 watts of power per desktop per hour. With 120 desktops in the new building, this equates to a financial saving of around £7,500 every year, through reduced power costs alone.



Everything that we wanted less than Citrix

In addition to a smaller power bill, the school also gained financially as it did not need to invest in purchasing and running large air-conditioning units to cool the four rooms. "We are making savings hand over fist," says Dewick. "The school bursar did some calculations and found that we had gained return on our investment in PowerTerm WebConnect in one year, as a result of the reduced power and cooling costs."

The reduction in IT operating costs has enabled Dewick to justify the purchase of new educational software. "My goal is always to improve the school's IT facilities," he says. "It can be hard to afford specialist software, such as geographic information systems for geography and graphic design packages for art and design subjects. We have been able to purchase new applications and software upgrades that really benefit our pupils."

A LONG-TERM STRATEGY

Since the initial installation of thin clients within the new building at The King's School, the IT team has expanded its use of PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView. The school has now introduced thin clients within the Sixth Form Centre and Library, which increases the number of thin clients managed by the Ericom solution from 120 to 152. All of the school's pupils and staff have the opportunity to log into the system, which represents 1,100 potential users.

Such has been the success of PowerTerm WebConnect RemoteView that the school plans to use thin clients more extensively across the entire school in the months ahead. It has purchased PowerTerm WebConnect licenses to cover the entire school's requirements, which



enables it to expand the number of thin clients attached to the system as and when it needs to. Eventually, Dewick hopes to have thin clients in every classroom.

He concludes: "Year on year, we have to try to make real savings in the IT department to allow the school to invest in the new applications that will support teaching and learning. By helping us to keep our IT maintenance and running costs down, PowerTerm WebConnect is helping us to achieve this goal."

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