

St. Cloud State University

ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY INCREASES SUPPORT TIME UP TO 50 PERCENT BY REMOTELY TROUBLESHOOTING AND REPAIRING PCS WITH ALTIRIS MANAGEABILITY TOOLKIT FOR INTEL® VPRO™ PROCESSOR TECHNOLOGY

THE ALTIRIS® SOLUTION:

Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro

INTEL SOLUTION: vPro

CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT:

NO. OF DESKTOPS: 2,800

desktops, 800 laptops

NO. OF SERVERS: 75

HARDWARE: Hewlett-Packard

OS: Windows XP for PCs; 2000 and 2003 R2 for servers

LOCATIONS: university campus (87 buildings)

ABOUT ST. CLOUD:

St. Cloud State University (SCSU), Minnesota's second-largest university, has more than 16,000 students from across the nation and 92 foreign countries. St. Cloud State is highly accredited and offers 175 undergraduate and graduate programs in the colleges of Business, Education, Fine Arts and Humanities, Science and Engineering, and Social Sciences. Located 70 miles northwest of Minneapolis, SCSU is one of the few universities in the Upper Midwest to offer programs in the fields of aviation, meteorology and geographic information systems. With nearly 250 campus organizations, a top-ranked Division I hockey team and a popular study-abroad program, the university provides an enriching academic, cultural and social experience at a reasonable cost (www.stcloudstate.edu)



THE CHALLENGE

- > Increase productivity of the IT department and support professionals by decreasing travel time to PCs.
- > Improve quality of service and response time to students, faculty and staff
- > Implement a cost-effective solution

THE BUSINESS VALUES

- > The Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology eliminates the need for technicians to visit PCs to perform routine maintenance as well as troubleshooting and repairing problems at all levels of support
- > With the time saved traveling to PCs, technicians can repair machines faster therefore reducing downtime, and spend more time improving and implementing new IT services
- > SCSU recovers the per-machine cost of Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology many times over each year in increased productivity alone

THE INTERVIEW

ALTIRIS: What is the biggest support issue at St. Cloud State University?

ERIC DIETZ, WORKSTATION AND APPLICATION

SPECIALIST: Time. We only have 40 technicians to support about 3,000 PCs located among 87 buildings spread across our campus. It's not uncommon for many of our technicians to spend a large portion of their day simply walking to and from sites to perform routine maintenance. If we could eliminate the walking travel time and convert that to actual support time, we could gain thousands of hours a year in productivity, which could be spent increasing our services to faculty, staff and students. In addition, we could address important IT issues—such as planning and implementing new technologies—that are sitting on the back burner for want of time.

ALTIRIS: Did you resolve the time issue?

ED: Yes. I learned about a product—Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology—at a conference. My initial reaction was that it was smoke and mirrors, another marketing gimmick. With more investigation we learned more and purchased an Intel vPro based box, test drove it and got pretty excited. I told my boss, "This is pretty cool." So he checked it out and was immediately sold. That seems to be the initial reaction with Intel vPro. A seed is planted, it grows and once you understand what the technology can do, you want it. The benefits are significant. Intel vPro allows the Altiris product to take serverlike control of our PCs, whether they are turned on or off. Altiris can perform device discovery, out-of-band management, inventory, BIOS access, remote repairs and more. Bottom line: our technicians can do routine maintenance as well as level 2 and 3 support tasks without ever leaving their desks.

ALTIRIS: How did the demo go?

ED: I asked the IT staff to come by and play with the technology and give me their opinion. Everyone who saw the Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology demo consistently asked two questions. The first was, "How much does it cost?" and then immediately "When can I have it?"

ALTIRIS: What did you do next?

ED: We moved ahead and implemented the Altiris solution. The way we looked at it is the US\$18 or US\$19 per machine is a form of insurance. But in the academic world a technology's benefit is not measured solely by the return on investment (ROI). It's measured first and foremost by customer service levels. Do the students feel they are getting the service they are paying for? Are classes not getting cancelled because too many computers in the classroom are down? We have more than 130 electronic classrooms on campus. If an instructor PC is not working, that class session may have a very negative impact on those students That's not acceptable.

ALTIRIS: How is Altiris addressing that need?

ED: Just as we hoped it would. With Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology, our technicians can perform a wide variety of complicated troubleshooting and repair tasks from their own PCs without walking around campus. For example, under the old manual way of doing things, if a technician diagnoses a machine and suspects that it has a dead hard drive, he creates a ticket and then routes the ticket to one of our level 2 technicians. That technician would then have to walk to the building where the PC is located, power up the machine, look at the BIOS and run a hard drive test which can take 30 to 40 minutes. During that time, the technician must sit in front of the computer and twiddle his thumbs or hope he has another job in a nearby building. Altiris, on the other hand, allows a technician to remote into the machine—or several PCs simultaneously—from their own office and perform a BIOS level check. He could even run the tests overnight. That's where Altiris and Intel vPro really shine. They get down below the operating system and allow the technician to do a full analysis of the machine's hardware without having to physically visit it, that's a huge benefit. If we can eliminate the time our technicians spend walking around campus, we can receive up to a 50 percent increase in IT productivity.

ALTIRIS: What other challenges are you addressing with Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology?

ED: Power control is a big issue. The Altiris Out of Band Management feature allows us to manage machines remotely regardless of the state of their power or operating system. With the Altiris solution we can collect inventory, set up and configure computers, receive alerts, configure security and remote power settings, and a lot more. To put the benefits of this capability into perspective, we used to have another vendor's power control product but it only worked 40 percent of the time and required us to make complicated changes to our routers and other hardware. Altiris' feature works rock solid 100

“To put the benefits of [the Altiris Out of Band Management feature] into perspective, we used to have another vendor’s power control product but it only worked 40 percent of the time and required us to make complicated changes to our routers and other hardware. Altiris’ feature works rock solid 100 percent of the time without making any changes. It simply works best.”

—ERIC DIETZ
Workstation and
Application Specialist

percent of the time without making any changes.

ALTIRIS: How do these IT benefits help SCSU’s students, faculty and staff?

ED: They benefit directly with improved services. For example, one of our technicians is responsible for application deployment and imaging on 1,000 PCs located in labs and other public places. These machines typically take above-normal use and abuse, and are often in need of repair. With the extra time we will have to devote to support issues, thanks to the remote functionality of Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology, we will not see “out of order” signs for as long of a time as we used to. And we won’t go into meetings and get beat up because we have so many machines that students can’t use. In other words, we will be able to more quickly and efficiently fulfill IT’s mission to the campus. I think what you’ll find is within a year or a year and a half, Intel vPro will start to take on a cultural description like, “Remember back

in the day when a machine would have a bad hard drive and we had to physically touch it?” Altiris and Intel vPro are going to revolutionize support at SCSU and represent a positive cultural change for the IT department.

ALTIRIS: What are your department’s future plans?

ED: Altiris Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro and Intel vPro based PCs have become our new buying standards. Campus technicians are buying Intel vPro based PCs across the board. Each college makes its own purchasing decisions, and through grass roots efforts and partnerships we are able to help them find platforms and solutions that work for them. It’s safe to say that the cost of each machine will be repaid dozens of times throughout the year just in productivity hours saved. Any organization that can benefit from remotely maintaining, troubleshooting and repairing its PCs should give Manageability Toolkit for Intel vPro processor technology a test drive.

ABOUT ALTIRIS

Altiris, Inc. offers a full line of Web-enabled solutions that empower organizations to easily manage desktops, notebooks, handhelds and Windows, Linux and UNIX servers throughout the IT lifecycle. Altiris provides fully integrated, complete systems management solutions for client and mobile, server, and asset management. Altiris’ vision is to automate, simplify, and reduce the cost and complexity of IT lifecycle management with a rapid return on investment. For more information, visit www.altiris.com.



1 Intel® Centrino® Pro processor technology and Intel® vProaid dozens of times throughout the year just in productivity hours saved. Any organization that can benefit from platform to have an Intel AMT-enabled chipset, network hardware and software, as well as connection with a power source and a corporate network connection. With regards to notebooks, Intel AMT may not be available or certain capabilities may be limited over a host OS-based VPN or when connecting wirelessly, on battery power, sleeping, hibernating or powered off. For more information, see <http://www.intel.com/technology/manage/iamt>.

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