

Isambard Community School gets top deployment and management marks with Dell KACE Appliances



"We have to deploy applications across our network to a large number of desktops, and Dell KACE speeds this process up dramatically. By having this in place, we can save hours of time that can be spent on providing more value back to the school community instead."

*Matt Garland, IT Network Manager,
Isambard Community School*



Customer Profile

Industry:	Education
Country:	United Kingdom
Web:	www.isambard.swindon.sch.uk

Business Need

With its mixed environment, the amount of time needed to ensure that everything is kept up to date was hindering IT's ability to support the school in more valuable ways. In addition, the school was looking to implement a service desk to make dealing with IT issues easier in general.

Solution

The school chose the Dell KACE™ K1000 Management and Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliances to simplify the school's IT asset management and application deployment requirements. The Dell KACE solution also includes a service desk as part of the appliance, which delivers additional value.

Save Time.

Save Your Organization Money.

- £50,000 per year saved on service desk support and desktop management
- Over £100,000 estimated total savings
- Payback achieved within two months
- Integrated service desk feature provides school with cost avoidance, no need to acquire additional solution
- Ability to manage both Windows and Mac desktops from one appliance provides real benefit at lower cost
- Application packaging completed faster and more reliably—tasks take minutes rather than hours
- Service desk requests automatically routed through to IT team, saving time and making resolving issues more efficient
- Ability to concentrate on higher value IT projects—the school has implemented server virtualization to save on server hardware costs in the longer term

Isambard Community School in Swindon, U.K., is a new school developed as an innovative community learning center, established to deliver sustainable, high quality, inclusive education. Opened in August 2007 for Year 7 pupils, the school was built to meet the evolving needs of children within the area. As a new school, IT plays a large role within both the facility as well as the teaching environment.

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Matt Garland, IT network manager at Isambard Community School, is responsible for managing the establishment’s IT network and resources, from over 600 desktops and laptops through to the servers, networking and applications. With only a small team at his disposal, the amount of time required to keep these systems up to date was a large percentage of the school’s IT support resources.

Seeking Cure For Headache of Managing Mixed Environments

Even with a relatively new network installed, the sheer amount of management tasks that had to be completed was a major headache. “We wanted to simplify how we managed our systems. With the mixed environment that we have in place, the amount of time needed to ensure that everything is kept up to date was hindering our ability to support the school in more valuable ways. There were a lot of long-winded processes required, and ideally we looked to automate our systems management wherever possible,” explains Mr. Garland. “In addition, we were looking to implement a service desk to make dealing with IT issues easier in general. This was a substantial investment, and

we wanted to be sure that the school would see the most value.”

He decided on a list of criteria for selecting a new systems management solution. These included improved application packaging and deployment across the network, ease of asset management and discovery, as well as streamlined desktop deployment and provisioning. The service desk side of IT support was also evaluated, with ease of use and breadth of functionality being key criteria. Lastly, the school runs a mixed desktop environment of around 600 machines, featuring both Windows® PCs and Apple iMacs, so the ability to support a mixed desktop environment was crucial.

Technology at Work

Solutions

Dell KACE™ K1000 Management Appliances

Dell KACE K2000 Deployment Appliance

Services

Dell KACE JumpStart Sessions

"We have a number of Apple desktops in place within our media and art department, alongside the Windows machines that are in use throughout the school's other departments and for internal school requirements. Making sure that both sets of machines are up to date and have the latest application updates and security patches can be a substantial task," says Mr. Garland. "Any solution that we looked at would have to support both sets of machines."

Dell KACE makes deployment and management of resources simple

As part of his research into solutions that were available, he looked at the Dell KACE family of systems management appliances. He was impressed at what he saw— from the traditional benefits of using appliances, including speed and simplicity of installation, through to ease of use and all-in-one approach to systems management, the Dell KACE Management and Deployment Appliances exceeded the school's expectations.

After a demonstration, Mr. Garland chose the Dell KACE Appliances to simplify the school's IT asset management and application deployment requirements. "The Dell KACE Appliances were an elegant solution to the problems that we faced across asset management, application packaging and desktop support. Dell KACE also includes a service desk feature as part of the appliance, which delivered additional value for us as opposed to choosing a separate service desk system," Mr. Garland explains.

"One of the main reasons for choosing the Dell KACE Appliances was having the ability to handle management across the different desktop platforms that we have in place. With 600 machines to support and only two staff, this was a major task. While we looked at other desktop management solutions that could cope with Windows and Mac machines together, the other systems we considered were considerably more expensive and the maintenance costs were prohibitive. With Dell KACE, we are able to manage all our desktops regardless of the different operating systems from one central point and at a cost-effective price," continues Mr. Garland.

Dell KACE Service Desk Functionality Speeds Up Issue Resolution

The team immediately saw the value of the service desk platform that is present in the Dell KACE appliances. A Web interface enables users to automatically have their issue assigned to a member of the IT team, while problems can be tracked to completion and reported on. As there are only two members of staff that are responsible for handling issues, this makes managing service desk queries far simpler and more efficient. "Having the service desk alongside the asset and systems management solutions makes the whole process so much more efficient," comments Mr. Garland. "With such a small team, this helps us to work smarter."

The Dell KACE appliances were installed in around one day. This was followed by a JumpStart training program that

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delivered online training to Mr. Garland and his team during an afternoon session per week over the course of four weeks. This meant that the team could avoid the need to attend dedicated training sessions, while getting the background knowledge that they required to get up to speed with the appliances.

He comments, "The Dell KACE appliances make managing Isambard's IT far simpler. We have to deploy

applications across our network to a large number of desktops, and Dell KACE speeds this process up dramatically. By having this in place, we can save hours of time that can be spent on providing more value back to the school community instead. For example, we have been able to free up our time and implement server virtualization, reducing our spending on server hardware in the future."



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