



Thinstall Secures Desktops and Speeds Vista Migration for Canada's Premiere Teaching and Research University

More than 1400 licenses deployed securely to 47 decentralized sites, increasing stability and performance and reducing costs

HIGHLIGHTS

Challenges

- Cost efficient, conflict free, secure application deployment to over 1500 student desktops at more than 47 public workstation sites
- Quickly grow from 100 licenses to over 1400 in a mix of Fat and Thin clients on Citrix Presentation Servers
- Migrate to Windows Vista with highest-level security, lowest cost

Results

- Quick deployment has grown from 3 to 100 licenses with 1400 more soon to deploy
- 47 decentralized sites have greater stability so project is ahead of schedule
- The majority of applications in strategic plan have been successfully "Thininstalled" and future plans will raise the number of Thinstall deployments

The University of Alberta is recognized as one of the premier teaching and research-intensive institutions in the world, an incubator of creative research and ground-breaking discovery. Opened in 1908 as a board-governed public institution, the University of Alberta main campus and Campus Saint-Jean, its French-language faculty, are located in Edmonton, Alberta. The university has more than 36,000 students in more than 200 undergraduate programs and 170 graduate programs in 18 faculties, and a growing body of international students from more than 100 countries. These students are served by more than 11,000 faculty and staff. The university has an annual budget in excess of \$1 billion and attracts more than \$400 million in external research funding. By the year 2020, the University of Alberta aspires to be one of the top 20 public universities in the world.

THE CHALLENGE

Public workstations are a major component of student services at the university. These more than 1500 stations require that the IT department be able to push applications to the student desktops without any administrative costs, without conflicts with other programs and with complete security. Over the last two years, the IT department was tasked with finding the leading solution for both cost and ease of deployment while maintaining security and planning for migration to Microsoft Windows Vista™.

REQUIREMENTS

Three challenges faced the university's IT department:

- Ease of deployment was extremely important to minimize both the time spent initially and in any administrative capacity on an ongoing basis. Decentralized locations would number 47 sites.



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- Cost was critical to the selection process. The university budget required cost assessment and applied guidelines which made it imperative that the solution be the most cost effective solution available.
- Beginning with 100 licenses, the IT department would need to rapidly deploy more than 1400 additional licenses as soon as possible in a FAT client and Thin client mix from Citrix Presentation Servers.
- Migration to Vista would soon take place and a smooth transition would be vital to maintaining secure, well-functioning applications and keeping time and cost to a minimum.

THE SOLUTION

The IT department found it necessary to test the three leading vendor products; Altiris (acquired by Symantec now branded Altiris® Software Virtualization Solution® – SVS™), Softricity (acquired by Microsoft®, now branded SoftGrid®) and Thinstall. Over a two year period all three were tested. Pierre Genest, Senior Systems Analyst Specialist with the University of Alberta, made the final decision to deploy Thinstall.

“I evaluated all three major products and Thinstall was by far, the best solution for both cost and ease of deployment. Thinstall was superior as a product that met standards for adaptability, ease of use, compatibility,

efficiency, and minimal administration. After considerable research and testing I can honestly say that nothing compares to Thinstall.”

THE RESULTS – AND THE FUTURE

Currently the university is using 100 “Thinstall” licenses and will soon deploy 1400 more. No problems were encountered with either FAT clients or thin clients on Citrix Presentation Servers. Initially three “Thinstall” applications were produced with more being added as the project continues. License metering is being managed through central servers.

With 47 decentralized sites using network topology and infrastructure throughout the university backbone and all workstations, the ease of use has made it possible to proceed more quickly than initially planned. Desktops are all managed by an in-house solution. The university is looking at LANDesk® (a Thinstall OEM Partner) and Intel vPRO™ technology for the migration to Vista™.

Looking forward, Genest says, “We are able to Thinstall all applications and expect to continue to Thinstall the majority of our applications. The Thinstall executable is being provided by local HD, CD, USB key and network share.”

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Pierre Genest,
University of Alberta
Senior Systems Analyst Specialist



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