

VDI Solution for Moss Point School District.

A Common Problem

Moss Point School District, like many school districts across the United States, is challenged by an increase in technology initiatives that require modern hardware and operating systems. Before the transition to VDI, the district was comprised mostly of older computers which required frequent repairs. Due to budget cuts, the technology staff was reduced and funding for technology initiatives was decreased, yet technology demands increased with education initiatives like Common Core, district and state online assessments, computer-based learning, and online learning systems.

Brian Bowman, Moss Point's current Coordinator of Technology, was the Systems Administrator at the time of the transition. He was working with the former Director of Technology on implementing VDI. The problem faced by the IT department, according to Bowman, was "the complexity and problems we were having with replacing our current environment. A lot of the older machines had to be replaced." They needed to find a way to be able to replace these older computers with newer ones or have these older computers perform at the levels the district demanded. They also needed to simplify the repair and update process with the constantly expanding numbers of machines being added while keeping the same number of staff and a limited budget.

Background

The district began looking into virtual desktops as a solution a couple of years ago for computer lab replacements. Each computer lab had approximately 30 computers. The elementary schools housed 2-4 labs per campus. The middle and high school levels have 7-8 labs per campus. Bowman tried many different solutions with many vendors, but each time the cost per seat exceeded the cost to purchase a physical desktop replacement.

After nearly giving up on VDI, the IT Director at the time noticed an article on VDI about Aledo ISD in Texas. The IT Director asked Bowman to speak with them to discover any solutions they might have overlooked. In the discussion, Aledo ISD mentioned that while they have been doing VDI for nearly 10 years, they would highly recommend HVE for all their VDI and server needs. A meeting with HVE was set up and a discussion started. Bowman was already successfully using VMWare to virtualize servers, so extending to the desktops with HorizonView made sense. After several meetings and researching HVE's customer install base, Moss Point knew it was time to move forward!

Continued on back...



Profile

Location: Moss Point, MS

Students: 2054

Staff: 340

Overview

Number of Virtual Desktops: 250
(with room to expand)

Who is using Virtual Desktops?

- Moss Point High School Labs
- Moss Point Escatawpa Upper Elementary Labs
- Moss Point Kreole Primary Labs
- Moss Point Alternative Lab

Hardware:

(4) HVE-101 Appliances

Zero-clients: 180 Zero Clients

Length of deployment: 3 days per system

The HVE Solution

The technology environment of Moss Point schools has proven the reliability and worth of HVE appliances. This is a perfect model for other K-12 education organizations. The flexibility of purchasing a small VDI environment that can easily scale into the larger environment Moss Point runs today has been seamless. Bowman states, “The HVE engineers have assisted with us with our maintenance and planning to become successful at virtualization. The all-in-one converged HVE solution negates the frustrating support call conversations about what part of the solution is the issue in a troubleshooting scenario. HVE has the answers.” Bowman also states, “The HVE management team in general has helped me not only plan what I need to do, but also showed me the roadmap to success.”

In the initial project, a single HVE-101 appliance was purchased in order to maximize performance for 60 LG Teradici set-top zero clients. The zero clients were purchased to replace the physical computers. The HVE-101 unit functions as a standalone converged VDI solution running 60 clients along with the VMWare HorizonView control servers. The HVE server was placed at the school campus due to network connectivity limitations. The initial setup and training, including installation of new clients took three days. From that starting point the district began scaling out, adding more and more labs into VDI.

Outcomes

After running VDI in the computer labs for 6 months and thoroughly testing the environment, Moss Point was highly pleased with the results. The IT department noticed a decline in the onsite repairs to the computer labs. Many issues could be resolved remotely. “We can now look under a single pane of glass to see the broken workstation and know that we need to get to that before testing. So we have more students who can sit in front of a monitor and get work done,” stated Bowman.

Seeing the potential for expansion was not difficult for Bowman. Technicians were better equipped to handle the increase in workstations required by the schools. Overall user response has been positive as well. Moss Point is a proven case of how virtual labs can be implemented within tight budgets without jeopardizing performance and quality. The implementation of VDI not only saw immediate cost savings to the district, but provided future cost savings. The cost of ownership is less than the purchase of a normal PC-based computer lab in addition to adding an additional 2-years beyond the traditional lifespan of 5 years, lowering the overall cost per unit.

“Being an HVE customer for 2 years, backed by experts is why we believe in HVE.”

–Brian Bowman,

*Coordinator of Technology,
Moss Point School District.*

About HVE ConneXions

HVE’s engineering philosophy is to create Manageable, Scalable, and Reproducible and Predictable (MSRP) solutions. We base our solutions on proven virtualization technologies running on high-performance, next generation hardware. The result is an overall cost-effective and high-performance environment that scales to customers’ needs.



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