

Case Study

Organization:

Nova Hreed



Industry:

Education

UK Math and Science Magnet School Taps New Boundary Technologies for Software Deployment, PC Security and PC Power Management

Profile:	Nova Hreed in Swindon, England is a specialist college/magnet school for science, mathematics and computing – serving more than 1,200 students ages eleven to sixteen.
Situation:	Existing software deployment solution was underperforming and ill-equipped to handle school's IT expansion; need for greater PC security across the network and PC power management to reduce energy costs.
Solution:	Working through NetWorld UK, Nova Hreed uses New Boundary Technologies' Prism Deploy® for software deployment, Policy Commander® for PC security and PwrSmart™ for PC power management.
ROI:	Improved IT administration efficiency, tighter PC security and reduced energy costs.
Describing New Boundary Technologies:	Flexible, Efficient, Scalable

Out of Control

Nova Hreed (Swindon, England) is a specialist college/magnet school for science, mathematics and computing – serving more than 1,200 students ages eleven to sixteen. In 2007, Nova Hreed moved to a new building and upgraded its IT infrastructure, including several computer suites and interactive technology rooms; all classrooms feature wired and wireless technology.

"To say we had had lots of educational and administrative software to deploy following the move would be an understatement," said Dalton Godwin, Nova Hreed's IT manager. "Schools in general are pretty software-intensive, and that's even more true with a school such as Nova Hreed that's geared specifically for science, math and computing. The need for data security is also critical – very few institutions have data that's more confidential than that involving children."

Dalton notes that Nova Hreed had been using a customized education software deployment solution, but was not happy with it: "We had significant issues with the solution's ability to group computers with similar configurations and then roll-out new software – it was terribly inefficient. The only thing about the previous solution we liked was inclusion of New Boundary Technologies' software packager, Prism Deploy Packager. We could easily package the desired software updates with Prism, we just couldn't deploy them as desired."

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Experiencing Control

"We wanted to find out if there was more to the Prism product, so we started talking with NetWorld UK [New Boundary Technologies' UK distributor]. We learned from NetWorld UK that the Prism Suite actually had a much more robust method of software deployment – Prism Deploy – that could not only streamline the deployment process, but also perform automatic updates, initiate repairs and reduce installation errors. It was an easy decision to ditch our previous software deployment package and go with the full Prism Deploy product," said Dalton.

Prism Deploy is a robust, yet simple and granular, software deployment platform that delivers complete control over computing infrastructures by automating software deployments, updates, repairs and removals to any and every Windows computer across an organization.

Like most educational institutions, Nova Hreod's budgets also are pretty close to the bone. "Prism Deploy not only meets our deployment needs, it meets them in a price-sensitive way. Competing applications weren't just less robust than Prism Deploy, their price points put them out of the running as well," added Dalton.

Implemented in Autumn 2008, Prism Deploy made spreading education software on Nova Hreod's network when and where it was needed "a snap," Dalton said. "Whether it's a system-wide deployment that's called for or getting software to just a couple of PCs, Prism does it beautifully. We use it to install

everything from SIMS [school information management system] software, to Macromedia Studio, Windows configurations and network card drives, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Reader and Flash, to HP printer drivers, QuickTime and Shockwave. Prism Deploy also is really great for software that has lots of updates, such as Windows and Java."

"We're finding that Prism Deploy is so much more manageable and scalable than alternative solutions. We can put in new

PCs and deploy a ton of software to them, knowing exactly when and where the software is going," added Dalton.

Every day, requests large and small come up at Nova Hreod that call for Prism Deploy. Dalton cites a small, but important, instance when chess software was needed for a couple of the school's PCs at the last minute: "I was at home when the request came in, but there was no need to head into work. I just logged into the Prism Deploy console from home and sent off the software to the necessary PCs. It was simple and efficient."

Dalton notes that what is "really brilliant" about Prism Deploy is that his small staff of three, including himself, does not have to go around to each of the school's 700 PCs to individually install updates and configuration changes: "Our small staff wouldn't have a chance of keeping on top of all the needed software deployments without Prism Deploy's capabilities. What's also nice is that we can easily add more licenses without adding more staff."

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Nova Hreod, IT Manager

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1300 Godward Street NE,
Suite 3100
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612.379.3805 or 800.747.4487
info@newboundary.com
www.newboundary.com

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Even More Control

Beyond software deployment, Nova Hreed also found itself turning to NetWorld UK and products from New Boundary Technologies to meet core PC/network security standards and PC power management requirements.

Not only does student data need to be secure, its sensitivity makes it subject to lots of compliance protocols. Dalton recalls a serious security breach, which demonstrated that major security upgrades to the network were imperative. "That's where New Boundary Technologies' Policy Commander product stepped up. It automatically monitors and enforces configuration policies, and it's extremely accurate. Configuration time is cut way down as well; Policy Commander takes a fraction of the time it would to configure and protect our networks and PCs manually."

Specifically, Dalton notes that Nova Hreed has lots of shared network drives, and that it was a huge challenge to manage and secure them appropriately: "Policy Commander brought that situation totally under control by allowing us to create custom policies to secure our network resources by setting Active Directory® permissions. Our networks are completely secured with Policy Commander, and at a fraction of the cost compared to other security vendors."

Nova Hreed is also using PwrSmart from New Boundary Technologies. PwrSmart is a simple, automated PC power management solution that centrally controls power settings and energy consumption.

Under Nova Hreed's leasing agreement, the owner of the building picks up all utility expenses, but understandably wants to keep energy expenses under control. "The building's owner asked us to explore ways to reduce our energy use," said Dalton.

Nova Hreed first tried to manage PC power management settings by going from computerto- computer and manually running power management scripts across more than 500 nonlaptop computers — a cumbersome and inefficient process.

Today, Nova Hreed uses PwrSmart to segment staff and student PCs and appropriately control PC power consumption based on use and ensure PCs hibernate when not in use. "PwrSmart makes controlling PC power management settings simple," said Dalton. "It's easy to assign different power schemes to staff and student computers based on when they leave the building each day. It's also easy to quickly adjust power settings on an ad-hoc basis, for example, if computers need to stay on later for parent-teacher conferences."

In a typical month, Nova Hreed saves approximately £3,000 (\$4,950) by using PwrSmart to ensure that its 595 computers are powered down when they are not in use.

PwrSmart not only enables Nova Hreed to extend the life of its IT assets, it makes the building owner much more comfortable about the school's energy consumption curve. Dalton says he's eager to check out the new version of PwrSmart, which provides the option of totally switching off PCs that aren't being used.

"Thanks to the flexibility, efficiency and scalability that Prism Deploy, Policy Commander and PwrSmart provide, we're ready for any future IT expansions," said Dalton.