Sierra Sands Unified School District

Graduating to Effective and Simplified Technology Management and Security

Business Needs

- Enable educators to better leverage needed technologies by ensuring such technologies are successfully supported, managed, and secured.

Solution

- LANDesk® Management Suite
- LANDesk® Antivirus

Business Benefits

- Reduced average support response times from seven days to two days, and reduced urgent support responses from hours to five minutes or less.
- Saving 125 man-hours per year in gathering software compliance data, as well as automatically enjoying real-time, accurate compliance data and reporting.
- Found that 100% of all of its 1,500 computers are secure from the latest viruses and spyware threats.

Located in the Indian Wells Valley of California's beautiful high desert, Sierra Sands Unified School District is committed to providing the highest quality education in a safe environment to all K-12 students. As one of the finest educational institutions in California, the district's school system offers quality programs and teaching expertise that lead to the improvement of student achievement throughout the district. Through the efforts of staff, students and community, all schools in the district have been recognized for excellence nationally or by the state. Additionally, some of the district's schools have earned the distinction of being named California Distinguished High Schools or being designated as a National Blue Ribbon School.

With technology playing an ever-increasing role in educational communities as a whole, Sierra Sands continually looks for ways how technology can contribute to the district's overall success. And, to enable the optimized use of that technology, Sierra Sands relies on LANDesk® Management Suite and LANDesk® Antivirus to manage, support, and secure its 1,500 Windows and Macintosh computers spread throughout the district.

Enabling and Supporting Technology in the Classroom

From projectors in the classrooms to different software applications used for testing and teaching students, technology has a tremendous presence in the educational field. However, the attitude of Sierra Sands' more than 600 teachers and staff members hasn't always been favorable toward technology. "There were a lot of technology innovations they wanted to use, but they were hesitant to invest time in learning or using them because they didn't trust that we could support them on it," says Donnie Morrison, director of technology at Sierra Sands Unified School District. "Shortly after LANDesk was implemented, our users realized that we could efficiently and effectively support them and the general attitude toward technology started to change. They saw that we could now respond quickly to issues and support the things they wanted to do in the classroom."

One of the most significant influences on employees' perspective toward technology at Sierra Sands is LANDesk Management Suite's ability to remote control users' workstations to fix problems. Even though the school district basically only has two technicians to support its 600 users and 1,500 workstations, LANDesk® software enabled it to drastically improve user support and its ability to respond to support incidents quickly and efficiently.

"Within just a few months of implementing LANDesk it was very evident that the level of support that we were able to provide to our users had improved dramatically," Morrison says. "Being able to remote into the computers and deal with issues immediately has had a huge impact on how people perceive the way the department is being run. Average response times went down from seven days to two days. Response times for urgent incidents went down from a couple hours to five minutes or less. LANDesk really made us look like superstars."

The reduction in response times came as a direct result of not having to drive as often to the different schools and make deskside visits to resolve issues. "For most of the calls we can remote into a user's computer and get the problem fixed without sending a technician out," Morrison says. "That has saved us tremendously on drive time and time on site, resulting in at least one to two man-hours saved per incident, not to mention the savings on gas and wear and tear on the vehicles."

Making Users Happy

Not only has the remote control capability in LANDesk® Management Suite improved the way Sierra Sands' IT support staff is able to support the district, it has also improved the relationship between the support staff and users. Without question, users are happier with the improved support responses, but remote control in LANDesk Management Suite also opens a channel for two-way remote visual communication that creates opportunities for one-on-one user training and improved interaction. "Remote control in LANDesk is as much a training tool for us as it is a support tool," Morrison says. "We can remote into users' computers and quickly demonstrate how to use a piece of technology or program. It makes them happy and more likely to use that technology, and that's important! It's been a huge part of helping attitudes change and getting people to adopt newer technologies."

Simplifying Compliance

In addition to helping Sierra Sands better support its users, LANDesk® Management Suite has also enabled the district to better manage its technology resources, especially in terms of software compliance. "Short of spending our entire summer walking around to every computer, prior to LANDesk we had no good way of knowing what was installed on people's computers," Morrison says. "We used to spend five to 10 minutes physically at each of our 1,500 computers looking at the Add or Remove Programs dialog to gather compliance information. With LANDesk it's now only a matter of taking a total of five to 10 minutes to review the reports for the entire district and make sure we're in compliance. That's a savings of at least 125 man-hours per year just in the area of software compliance."

In addition, LANDesk® software license monitoring simply makes it easier for Sierra Sands to stay in compliance and to not overspend for licenses. Says Morrison, "This can equate to saving tax payer money in avoiding fines or lawsuits for violating software license agreements, as well as saving money by not buying licenses that never get used."

> *"LANDesk simplifies everything we do, saves us time and money, and makes life in the district for us and our users more productive. It has been a huge success."*
>
> **— Donnie Morrison**
> Director of Technology
> Sierra Sands Unified School District

Securing Technology Investments

The LANDesk® solutions also play a major role in keeping the technology investments at Sierra Sands secure. This has been most notable in the area of antivirus and anti-spyware protection.

Previously, the district used one of the other major AV vendor's solutions, but, according to Morrison, it had been an "absolute nightmare" for the district's IT team. "With our old AV solution, 50 percent of the agents wouldn't show up in the management console," Morrison says. "It made it impossible for us to ever tell if a majority of our computers were up-to-date with AV definitions or not. Even with the ones that were up-to-date, we struggled to remotely manage how antivirus functioned on those machines. We spent nearly two years trying to get it to work right, but without success."

Sierra Sands had already enjoyed significant success managing its computers with LANDesk® Management Suite, so when LANDesk® Antivirus came out the district decided to switch AV solutions. "LANDesk Antivirus has worked great for us," Morrison says. "We can see all the AV agents and check their status to make sure they're getting updated. It reports to us on any antivirus activity. If someone brings anything in from the outside that is infected and tries to launch it on their computer, LANDesk Antivirus will catch it right away and stop it, helping us to really protect our endpoints. We really measure our success by the fact that we haven't had an antivirus outbreak since LANDesk Antivirus has been implemented here."

LANDesk Antivirus combines with LANDesk Management Suite to dramatically improve and simplify Sierra Sands' ability to manage and secure its technology investments. "Not only does LANDesk work better than all the solutions we were using before, but it combines everything we need into a unified suite with a central management console," Morrison says. "LANDesk simplifies everything we do, saves us time and money, and makes life in the district for us and our users more productive. It has been a huge success."

Copyright © 2008 LANDesk Software Ltd. or its affiliated companies. LANDesk is a trademark or registered trademark of LANDesk Software, Ltd. and its affiliated companies- in the United States and/or other countries.

*Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.

Each customer's results may vary based on its unique set of facts and circumstances.
0508/LP/BB/JJ LSI-0740

LANDesk® | make IT happen
An Avocent® Company