

ACADEMY SCHOOL DISTRICT TWENTY CONSOLIDATES NETWORK RESOURCES



Nestled at the base of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado Springs, CO, Academy School District Number 20, creates an exceptional learning environment for students in grades K-12. The district's 23 schools educate over 16,000 students and employ 3,000 faculty and staff members. Ron Horne, Network Manager for Academy School District Number 20, and the Technology Services department provide and maintain high-level computer services for the students, staff, and administrators throughout the district. Over 19,000 end users require secure, shared access to files and printers from any Macintosh®, Windows®, and Unix® computer in the network. Thus, Horne demands an open interoperability solution that enables file and printer sharing, file locking, security, internet access, e-mail, and application sharing.

THE NEED FOR OPEN INTEROPERABILITY

Prior to deploying LSI Logic Storage Systems, Inc.'s Syntax Enterprise Services, Horne provided cross-platform computing to clients through a complex combination of software and hardware. Freeware emulators ran on Sun Sparc clones with SunOS 4.x to provide cross-platform file and printer sharing services. However, the freeware provided insufficient access to the student information system, some network applications failed, and file locking functioned poorly. To work around these problems, the department installed Windows NT 4.0 file servers at each of the remote locations to provide access to the student information system and secure file locking and sharing. Each additional piece of hardware and software that Horne introduced to the architecture to provide the needed connectivity added to the complexity and cost of network administration. Because the school district works with a limited budget, the department needed to optimize their existing technical and support resources while maintaining the option to expand and evolve their network as the district demands.

The dispersed network required a product that would enable truly open, enterprise-level interoperability. To meet this need, Horne selected Syntax Enterprise Services based on the proven capabilities of

TotalNET Advanced Server (TAS), the interoperability component of Syntax Enterprise Services. TAS provided Horne with a simple choice in network management, "We liked the added functionality, interface, and security options. It provided everything we needed in one easy to manage package." The Technology Services team installed TAS onto Tatum UltraSparc 10 servers in less than thirty minutes at each of the 23 schools. TAS replaced the freeware and enabled Horne to remove the NT servers from each remote location. He collapsed other network utilities, such as Apache® and POP Mail®, onto the TAS servers, further reducing

ROCKY MOUNTAINS IN COLORADO SPRINGS, CO



network complexity. The move to TAS greatly reduced the amount of hardware, software, and administration resources needed to connect clients throughout the district. Even though network servers are located distantly throughout the district, TAS creates a single point of administration that can be accessed through an HTML-based Graphical User Interface (GUI). Horne describes the GUI as "one of the best parts of TAS because it is easy to use and allows for remote administration of all our servers." The intuitive GUI allows the Technology Services team to add, delete, and modify users from their office, rather than travelling to individual schools.

BENEFITS OF SYNTAX ENTERPRISE SERVICES

The stability of the district's information system increased significantly with the implementation of Syntax Enterprise Services. Syntax Enterprise Services allowed Horne to condense his system onto a smaller number of reliable servers. With the previous architecture, Technology Services had to travel to remote locations to reboot NT® servers two or three times per week. However, Syntax Enterprise Services increased the reliability of the network, decreased time of administration, and eliminated the need for NT servers at each of the 23 remote locations. Subsequently, the Technology Services team can focus on maximizing existing resources and Horne has avoided hiring additional technical support. Referring to the saved resources, he states, "This impacts the level at which we fund technology in the schools, allowing us to provide more technology for the students." Students, staff, and administrators benefit from additional resources and highly available services. Teachers gained access to educational tools that were unavailable through the old network; students share files transparently across platforms; and each end user works with the confidence of knowing that all file services are completely secure and stable.

SUMMARY

Ron Horne of Academy School District Number 20 implemented Syntax Enterprise Services to reduce the complexity of his network. TAS loaded onto reliable Unix servers creates a stable, open, and efficient network. Syntax Enterprise Services enables the full integration of network services throughout the district. The Technology Services department spends significantly fewer hours administering the network and is able to focus on maximizing existing resources and services. Syntax Enterprise Services adds reliable, transparent interoperability to the network, enabling end users to share files, printers, and applications across platforms with ease and confidence. According to Horne, "Syntax Enterprise Services will continue to be the central focus of our network. It provides the functionality and compatibility that we need."

"If a company is looking for an application that can emulate other network protocols, provide ease of installation and is fully manageable, TotalNET Advanced Server is the perfect product. Our network is faster, more stable, and more reliable since we have integrated Syntax Enterprise Services into our environment... Syntax Enterprise Services allows us to offer the highest level of functionality at a reasonable cost." - Ron Horne, Network Manager, Academy School District Number Twenty.