



Tucson School District Dramatically Enhances Productivity of Student Account Creation through DSRAZOR for Windows

Delegates Day-to-Day Account Management to Focus on Higher Value Responsibilities

Background:

The Amphitheater Public School District, which is based in Tucson, Arizona, needed to delegate the day-to-day management of student accounts without compromising security. The district also needed to automate student account creation. The tedious, manual task of account creation took approximately 10 minutes per account to complete. Considering that Amphitheater has nearly 17,000 students, there was no way to effectively create all the accounts through conventional means.

By implementing Visual Click Software's DSRAZOR for Windows, the district realized a rapid return on investment. Not only was the IT team able to delegate daily account management tasks; they were able to complete an account-creation job in one week that, using their previous system, would have taken an estimated 18 months.

Situation: Seeking More Delegation and Automation

David Fernandez faced a challenge. As Executive Director of Technology for the Amphitheater Public School District, he needed to find a productive and secure way to delegate student account management tasks. For instance, passwords needed to be created or reset, and accounts needed to be enabled or disabled.

Rather than relying on the district's limited Information Technology team to deal with such tasks, it was clear to Fernandez that these responsibilities could be handled more efficiently at the individual school level. Each school has its own technician. If appropriate measures were taken, these technicians could be handed day-to-day account management tasks without compromising the district's security procedures.

The objective was to free up the district's core IT staff to concentrate on activities that would deliver higher value and impact. Having recently migrated

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from a NetWare- to a Windows-networked environment, the group had a number of new applications to support and maintain.

Considering that the district had nearly 17,000 students, and each one would need a personal account, the demands on the IT group were continuing to grow. “The challenge was that we had limited staff,” says Fernandez. “We needed assistance to manage so many accounts.”

In addition to managing the accounts, the IT team also faced the challenge of creating the accounts. Creating them manually took up to 10 minutes each. Given that accounts were gradually being assigned to all the district’s students, such a method could dominate an individual’s workload for 18 months.

Action: Deploying DSRAZOR for Windows

Given these challenges, the IT group began exploring its options. Several software vendors promised solutions to the department’s account creation and management challenges. However, it wasn’t until the team downloaded and evaluated DSRAZOR for Windows that they realized that this product offered the solution they sought. Not only was DSRAZOR cost-effective; it was intuitive and easy to navigate.

“The ease of use and versatility made things a lot easier,” says Gary Serencsa, the district’s Network Coordinator. “It just takes a couple of minutes to show people what to do. Other products lacked its level of functionality and weren’t as easy to use.”

The IT team was also impressed with Visual Click’s service and support. “They actively checked in with us to ensure we were meeting our objectives and were having success with the product,” adds Serencsa. “In fact, they really went above and beyond in terms of support. They were actively helping us with the creation of forms and showing us how to effectively delegate various tasks.”

The deployment of the application to the technical specialists at the various schools was largely accomplished by creating delegation forms. The specialists were then taught how to use the forms, which turned out to be a relatively simple process.

Meanwhile, account creation was automated. The process now involves the IT group obtaining a spreadsheet of student information, importing it, and then creating and manipulating the accounts for continuing use. “That just takes a few minutes now,” says Serencsa. “I’m very impressed.”

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Results: Dramatic Payoffs in Productivity

The district has been extremely pleased with the rapid results generated through the use of DSRAZOR for Windows. Within months of investing in the product, the district was already seeing quantifiable improvements in its operating processes.

From an account management perspective, the product enabled the district's IT group to delegate account management without providing direct access to student file servers. Ensuring the security of student accounts while enhancing the productivity of overall IT operations was in line with the IT team's objectives.

Now, the IT group can invest more of its time in activities that promise high-value results. Conserving time and resources has greatly benefited the department. "My goal has been to free up central staff from mundane tasks," explains Fernandez. "Creating and changing passwords was not the best use of their time. I would rather involve them in more high-level services. Now, they have more time for troubleshooting and Help Desk activities. The product offers us a way to free up the time of network techs that are critical to us but still provide the services that are critical to schools."

On the account creation side, the impact was truly dramatic. Now, the team can create hundreds of accounts in the same amount of time that it once took to create a single account. Using the old, manual approach, it would have taken 18 months to create 17,000 individual accounts. Now, the task can be handled in approximately one week.

"I don't know of any other tool that can do that as effectively," says Fernandez. "By reducing the time necessary for account creation, DSRAZOR for Windows had enabled our people to focus on other critical tasks, such as maintaining the network infrastructure and managing the migration from NetWare to Microsoft."

Productivity gains of this sort have enhanced the service levels and overall impact of the district's IT group. "We are now able to respond to important school requests in a timelier manner than in the past," adds Fernandez. "Our team is no longer spending days and days creating accounts manually. By accelerating the process, we've accelerated our ability to deliver other relevant services."

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As Fernandez sees it, “DSRAZOR for Windows justifies itself. It allows us to do what we couldn’t do – and do it easily.” However, the district is far from finished in its quest to make the most of what DSRAZOR has to offer. The IT group is currently exploring the possibility of using the product for staff account management as well as periodic district performance audits. “We have high hopes for DSRAZOR,” he concludes. “We hope to learn more about Visual Click’s product capabilities and find still more ways to create value.”

About Visual Click Software, Inc

Envisioned in 1996 and incorporated in 1999, Visual Click is the leader and pioneer in visually customizable computer network security access management and reporting applications.

Network Security Access Management: Our patented Visual Designer Technology allows for customer- specific applications to be developed in minutes rather than days, weeks or months. This powerful technology creates a new paradigm in network security access management. Previous technology either required use of overly large and complex 'consoles' that performed slowly and required product-specific training or required customized programming.

Our technology allows customers to create exactly what they need to control their network security access management without burdening the Administrator or requiring custom computer programming costs.

Network Security Reporting: Our patented Visual Designer Technology allows for customer-defined reports to be developed in minutes with very little training. This powerful technology allows the Network Administrator to focus on the important matters of securing a network. With minor customizations, each Network Security Report can simultaneously be used for Network Security Access Management. Each Network Security Report can also be used to change the Network Security issues it uncovers. This important technology solves two problems at the same time, namely, reporting about Network Security non-compliance and enforcing corporate Network Security policy.

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Customer Benefits: Exceeding customer expectations is our number one goal. We know time is a resource that most IT professionals have in short supply. For this reason, our software is designed to reduce errors and minimize training costs, thereby freeing up valuable time to focus on more mission-critical tasks.

Also, so our customers can get the exact product functionality they need, we offer our Create My Solution™ service for expert custom reports and management applets.

From simplifying user management and maintaining regulatory compliance, to preparing for migration and delegating helpdesk duties, our software empowers our customers by saving them time and money associated with managing their networked environments.

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