

Henrico County Public Schools

Large Public School System Learns a Lesson in Proactive Virtual & Physical Application Performance Management



Overview

Virginia's Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS), which includes schools in the state capital of Richmond, works in partnership with the community to inspire, empower and educate every student to be prepared for success in the 21st century.

HCPS has an enrollment of more than 48,000 students and comprises 69 schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels. It is the fifth largest school district in Virginia.

Philosophy

Every student can learn. Students should develop 21st century skills. Student success requires a shared responsibility by students, teachers, parents, and community

Students develop best in a positive learning environment that is safe, clean, and well maintained.

We feel that diversity one of our strengths, and we strive to achieve unity of purpose and equity of opportunity.

A well-educated, highly motivated, and strongly supported staff is critical for a quality education. Strong community support should be cultivated and maintained

Each member of our school community should be treated with dignity and respect, and we are committed to continuous improvement and life-long learning.

Using eG Enterprise, Henrico County Public Schools takes the guesswork out of application monitoring in its physical and virtual IT infrastructure. The proactive nature of eG Enterprise has helped catch and fix problems before they affect users. This is another example of how eG Innovations is helping customers worldwide solve their most critical IT challenges.

The Challenge : Ensuring that its IT systems are as well cared for and “prepared for life” as its students are.

Today's public school systems have joined the computer age in a big way. Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS), the fifth largest school district in Virginia, has a data center with more than 70 virtual and physical servers and 20 virtual desktops.

There are 69 schools in the system. All are interconnected and also communicate with the data center as well to support a range of academic applications and business services such as registration, course content, quizzes/exams and more. In addition, all 25,000 middle and high students are given laptops and have protected access along with faculty and administrators to a learning management system called School Space.

With such an emphasis on learning, troubleshooting the inevitable IT problems remained a rather unenlightened process before HCPS installed the eG Enterprise Suite from eG Innovations, Inc. in 2008.

“With eG Enterprise, we can identify problems quickly, and our lower-skilled support staff can take action without having to call in the experts.”

“Application response times were poor, and I didn't know why,” says Chris Lifsey, IT systems engineer at HCPS. “We had no insight into performance metrics, so we had difficulty quickly identifying the true root cause of a problem. There was a lot of finger pointing during problem diagnosis since we had to look at each server and application separately. It was a slow, manual process.”

Lifsey and his staff oversee 53 ESX/ESXi virtual servers (which run School Space), 20 virtual desktops and 20 physical servers running Windows, Linux and Exchange. “I monitor 70+ Cisco devices on our network,” he says. “All of our schools connect to us via Ethernet, and this allows for bandwidth and availability monitoring from one place. Then we alert those who need to know.”

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Between School Space, Exchange and the network, Lifsey says he would need more than 70 agents with other tools to monitor everything, which would be cost prohibitive. "With eG, we need just 20 agents and get consolidated views of how all the services and applications are performing," he says. "That gives us peace of mind, knowing that even if something goes wrong, eG Enterprise will alert us so we often can fix the problem before users are affected."

eG Enterprise: Open, Flexible, Powerful, Easy to Use

HCPS primarily uses eG Enterprise to get an overview of where the bottlenecks are, to troubleshoot performance problems and for real-time monitoring of business services.

Lifsey says HCPC started to see value less than one week after installing eG Enterprise. He has since seen a 51% reduction in time to identify the root cause of performance issues, and has found a number of product features to be particularly useful.

These include:

- Single-agent monitoring, where one agent per server can monitor any mix of operating systems and applications regardless of server type or configuration
- Layered modeling, which clearly highlights which IT resource is the root cause of a given problem
- Automatic baselining that sets alert thresholds dynamically and helps avoid service outages
- Easy to use and understand interface
- Support for a wide range of operating systems, applications and servers
- Customizable, easy to use reporting.

eG Enterprise: A Proven IT Management Solution for the Education Industry

For a growing number of educational institutions, eG Enterprise service management software is the critical link between IT services and business needs. By providing true end-to-end service management in complex, distributed IT environments, eG Enterprise maximizes application performance and enhances end-user quality of experience.



For more information, contact:

Tim Clark

eG Innovations, Inc.

Email : tim@eginnovations.com

Ph: (336) 674-7189

About eG Innovations

eG Innovations, Inc. (www.eginnovations.com) is a global provider of performance monitoring and triage solutions for both virtual and physical IT infrastructures. The company's patented technologies provide proactive monitoring of every layer of every tier in the infrastructure, thereby enabling rapid diagnosis and recovery in enterprise and service provider networks.

By ensuring high availability and optimum performance of mission-critical business services, eG Innovations' solutions help enhance customers' competitive positioning, lower operational costs and optimize the performance of their infrastructures.

The company's eG VM Monitor™ was judged "Best of VMworld 2008" in the Application and Infrastructure Management category, and won three categories in the 2008 Virtualization Review Readers Choice Awards.