

Case Study - Ropes Independent School District

Background

Ropes ISD is a school district based in Ropesville, Texas, close to the metropolis of Lubbock. It serves the needs of approximately 350 students from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12. Ropes is part of Hockley County which includes various other small school districts clustered within a few miles of each other. Students in the region have an opportunity to choose their ISD based on competitive factors such as overall district performance, 1-1 computing initiatives etc. Academically and technologically, the Ropes ISD administration desires to position the District such that it attracts the top minds from surrounding areas.

Technology-enabled education is a key part of achieving that goal for Ropes ISD. Each student has been issued an electronic device in the District's 1-1 initiative. In addition, elementary students enjoy access to a computer lab which previously utilized the Dell Wyse thin client device to enable a VDI environment and deliver instructional content to students in an easily manageable fashion.

Challenge

As the Wyse VDI environment from Dell was fulfilling learner needs, the renewal for the District's license also came due. At this point in time, the Ropes ISD administration decided to thoroughly analyze the benefits of renewal as well as the costs associated with it. Synetra, a VDIworks partner, oversees the management and support of the entire Ropes ISD network and any applications used. Consequently, it was tasked by the District to learn exactly what the renewal would entail.

After a thorough analysis, it was found that Synetra already covered support for the virtual desktop applications that Dell would separately charge the district for. This led to Ropes ISD re-considering their stance on continuing with the Wyse VDI environment and pay extra for an aspect already taken care of. The challenge for the District now lay in finding a virtual desktop infrastructure solution provider that could replace the Dell Wyse solution in the school's elementary lab with an equally powerful and mature VDI product.

"Synetra was already covering support for Ropes' network and applications, it was only logical for them to save critical funds that would have been unnecessarily spent on support for the Wyse VDI solution," explains Tara Williams, Account Manager at Synetra.

Solution

The search for an alternative to Dell did not take long as VDIworks and Synetra have a long history of partnering to provide cutting-edge virtualization solutions to the education sector. Synetra explained the full features and benefits of the VDIworks Virtual Desktop Platform which integrates all the aspects of virtualization into one simplified solution. This includes connection brokering, Virtual Machine management, asset management, educational and general data security etc.

More importantly, since the VDIworks solution is hypervisor-agnostic, compatible with any hypervisor, the District could avoid vendor lock-in and enjoy greater control over future solution choices. This diminished any chance of a situation similar to the elementary lab arising in the future. The fact that VDIworks' solution is deployed in other K12 districts across Texas enabled the Ropes ISD administration to give the deployment the green light.



Industry

Education K-12

Business Needs

The primary objective was to save the school district money and provide a similar solution to the already existing Dell Wyse VDI solution. In addition to this, it was key to leverage the existing Dell Wyse thin clients and not incur any additional hardware costs.

Solution

The VDIworks Virtual Desktop platform allowed Synetra to offer an alternative to the already existing VDI solution. This ensured that the school district made significant savings on the additional support costs it was paying to keep the Dell Wyse VDI Solution up and running. As a result, everything kept on working as it was before from an end users' perspective with the benefit of cost savings for the school district.

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*Tara Williams
Synetra*

“VDIworks’ solution provided the end-to-end functionality that the Ropes ISD needed to keep its lab functional with virtual machines, and not compromise on any feature offered by Dell’s Wyse solution. Since the solution is successfully implemented in other school districts in Texas, the administration was confident that VDIworks and Synetra checked all the boxes in terms of product maturity, proven value and functionality,” added Ms. Williams.

Engineers from Synetra worked closely with the VDIworks engineering team to complete the deployment in the Ropes ISD elementary lab. This ensured that the transition from the Dell Wyse solution to the VDIworks’ VDI environment was smooth and did not disturb any learning activities, which ultimately is the most important factor.

Result

By deploying the VDIworks VDI environment, not only was Ropes ISD able to save thousands of dollars in support and solution costs, but they were also able to replace Dell’s solution with an equally powerful and robust solution that has consistently delivered value to educational institutes across Texas.

“VDIworks partnership with Synetra turned out to be a best of both worlds scenario for the District. They saved a large chunk of funds that can be now be used to serve other productive purposes and still enjoy the same virtual desktop infrastructure they previously had,” commented Ms. Williams.

Ultimately, by partnering Synetra’s support with VDIworks’ solution, the district was able to create win-win scenarios for all stakeholders across the District. The administration was able to save costs while the teachers and students were able to continue to enjoy the latest technology and work on virtual machines.

According to Jeff Mazar, VP of Business Development for VDIworks, “Ropes ISD is yet another example of why our solution is widely considered simple and cost-effective to deploy. It is also powerful enough to meet the virtualization needs of educational institutes that find themselves in financially and technologically challenging situations. This is not the first time we have become the common sense alternative for a K-12 district looking for something more affordable yet powerful.”

About VDIworks

VDIworks makes easy-to-use software that enables IT managers to centrally create, deploy and manage virtual desktop infrastructure. With more than 20 patents and five generations of proven success in enterprise environments, VDIworks offers ultimate simplicity and flexibility, giving customers an infrastructure- and hypervisor-agnostic technology for desktop virtualization.

The VDIworks Virtual Desktop Platform (VDP) offers IT organizations improved management and control, data and asset security, and a superior end-user experience. For more information on VDIworks, visit www.vdiworks.com and follow us on twitter at twitter.com/vdiworks.

About Synetra

Synetra takes a comprehensive approach to solving everyday IT problems. Synetra’s expert team and unparalleled service have made them the go-to partner for IT solutions and support throughout Texas for over 30 years. With offices in Dallas/Fort Worth, Midland/Odessa, Lubbock, Amarillo and El Paso, Synetra provides end-to-end IT solutions tailored to each customer - from assessments, to design, to implementation and support. To learn more, visit www.synetra.com.