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How Schools, Colleges and Universities use Stratodesk Software to Solve Challenges Facing Education VDI

Stratodesk Whitepaper

Among these obstacles are those associated with cost, management, and security. Some institutions may be deterred right away by the upfront cost required to deploy their VDI. Servers, purchasing new hardware, managing and securing endpoints, Windows licenses and malware/antivirus contracts can all cost a fortune. IT must deal with the massive demands placed on its own staff resources. In fact, it is estimated that organizations spend upwards of 1,000 hours a week on average updating, maintaining and patching their endpoints alone.[1] Unfortunately, given how busy IT system administrators are today, it is far too difficult for them to manage the endpoint security of each of their devices without the right solution.

In order to effectively deploy VDI, institutions must educate themselves on the many options, challenges, and benefits of scaling their network of devices, as well as the alternatives available to reduce IT staff hours and costs.

Educational institutions that already know the benefit of VDI may see the need to scale their existing environment, but are hesitant to begin the process because of budget restrictions. And they are right in being wary of a complete overhaul of their existing hardware. High performing endpoints can cost a fortune, and managing a rapidly growing and complex or mixed environment of endpoints can be a nightmare and drain on budget as well. Amidst the horizon of rapidly growing demands on time and budget, organizations must find better ways to manage and scale their environments, while at the same time cut back strain on staff who are left with more work than they can achieve alone.

With VDI, any given organization's productivity depends greatly on how well system administrators are able to effectively manage their entire network of mixed endpoint devices, and deliver virtual desktops, applications and necessary information to their end users in a convenient and expedient way. For this reason, organizations cannot afford to overlook this important aspect of their business. Endpoint management can, for better or for worse, have a disproportionate impact on the overall well being of day-to-day operations.

The problem of endpoint management in an education setting is made more difficult by the challenges specific to its industry. For example, IT must keep faculty and staff separate from student networks. In K-12 schools, IT must also manage many endpoints across various different school sites. Most schools will also have a mixed environment of many different devices. They need a solution that can collect these seemingly random assortment of devices into one standardized whole.

This paper seeks to explore effective strategies for institutions looking to begin with or expand their VDI while cutting costs and increasing security and performance. Also discussed is how the NoTouch Desktop product suite can proactively help organizations achieve their goals and better manage their complicated mixed environments of x86 and ARM based devices regardless of make, model or manufacturer.

[1] "The Cost of Insecure Endpoints," a study commissioned by Absolute and conducted by the Ponemon Institute.

Summary of Challenges Facing Education VDI

IT systems admins face several obstacles as they struggle to find a balanced approach to endpoint management while also growing the number of seats in their network. Their first obstacle to overcome is the Windows issue. In order to allow for VDI, organizations must house Windows on each of their endpoint devices. This means extra hours must be spent maintaining these devices. Not to mention IT must also provide antivirus and malware protection for each and every endpoint device. To make things worse, different devices house different versions of Windows, which creates even more complexity.

Another challenge facing IT is that of security. A key concern for education, system admins must not only increase and maintain a high security standard while also decreasing login times, they must enable teachers and students to access all of their apps from any device wherever they are. This causes great concern for IT administrators who now have an equally high demand put not only on budget and security but also on ensuring convenience and flexibility.

Reliability is the third great challenge and cannot be stressed enough. Without an endpoint solution in place that is hassle free and one that offers a seamless user experience, workers cannot function at peak performance. If there is any hassle at all on the end user, you can quickly lose the benefits of VDI as IT resources are redirected towards aiding and assisting workers. Technology that saves time not only for the worker but also for the IT system admin is of paramount importance.

Education also faces difficulty scaling their network in order to fit their growing student body, managing endpoints across multiple sites, and separating networks between faculty and students. To solve all of these challenges and more, education IT requires a sophisticated approach to VDI management.

How NoTouch Desktop Solves Challenges Facing Education VDI

As you can see, technological innovation has come to education and these innovations have brought with them challenges in deploying a cutting-edge VDI that is able to function at the highest level, delivering the best end-user experience without breaking the bank. Amidst the horizon of growlingly complex demands on time, budget, and security, Stratodesk software stands out as a game changer for end user computing in an education setting. Capable of repurposing both old and new devices into high performing, smart VDI Clients, Stratodesk software seeks to unify, standardize, and enhance the end user experience for staff, teachers, and students alike while delivering unparalleled reliability, faster login times, and protecting confidential student and administration data.

Stratodesk NoTouch Desktop, comprised of NoTouch OS and NoTouch Center, is the only endpoint OS and management solution able to run and manage both x86 and Raspberry Pi Thin Clients in the same environment. Our OS is Linux based, which means that it is impervious to common security threats that target or exploit x86 and ARM based devices. It can be installed via various installation methods like network (PXE) boot or MSI installer, and unlike competitors that require a specific piece of hardware to enable BYOD, NoTouch can run on any flash drive to let your end users access NoTouch or their native operating system side by side.

How Stratodesk Works Seamlessly with Your Preferred VDI to Unlock its Full Benefit

NoTouch repurposes existing devices into thin clients that require zero maintenance. This removes the Windows licensing obstacle, the need for anti-virus/malware contracts, updating individual devices, and beyond. Because NoTouch OS is Linux based, it is impervious to common malware or security exploits. Instantly deploy NoTouch onto thousands of devices via our various install methods (MSI installer, PXE boot) and enjoy hassle free endpoint computing.

When using Stratodesk software, educational institutions can expect these benefits:

- Cut Your Security Bill: NoTouch OS installs directly onto all of your endpoint devices bare metal, transforming them into high performing Thin Clients. Cancel your malware and antivirus contracts and save your money.

- Leverage Existing Hardware: Connect your existing hardware to your preferred VDI environment –no need for added hardware investments.

- Standardize Endpoints: Decrease management time and streamline your process with one look and feel across all of your endpoints.

- Take advantage of enterprise grade endpoint management to set user roles between faculty/staff and students and manage multiple sites from the convenience of one location.

Stratodesk NoTouch Desktop Overview

NoTouch Desktop helps boost security with its low footprint NoTouch OS, and saves your system administrators time by automating much of the work involved in endpoint management. By cutting costs, eliminating hassle, standardizing endpoints, and maximizing security, it is the solution of choice for businesses looking to scale their VDI.

NoTouch revolutionizes endpoint computing, elevates your workspace, automates management processes, and allows tens of thousands of devices to be managed from one central location. Additionally, NoTouch is the only endpoint management software that can be run on premises or from the cloud, which makes it the perfect solution for both VDI and DaaS.

The key benefits of NoTouch Desktop and how NoTouch solves major concerns facing institutions looking to scale are as follows:

NoTouch Desktop Saves On Costs

NoTouch comes with significant savings benefits. NoTouch Desktop provides a solution that easily repurposes PCs, Laptops and Thin Clients in your VDI into NoTouch clients, operating on NoTouch OS. Not only does NoTouch OS save money by eliminating the need for capital purchases of hardware while eliminating common security threats, our integrated management suite, NoTouch Center, gives complete control over all VDI endpoints across multiple sites from one location. Reduce IT staff hours and hassle with one single endpoint management solution for your entire VDI.

NoTouch Desktop Removes the Need to House Windows Locally on Endpoint Devices

NoTouch OS replaces the need to have Windows installed on local devices. In most cases, NoTouch OS is installed directly onto the device's hard drive. For evaluation purposes or in a BYOD environment, NoTouch can be booted live from a USB without touching the underlying OS. For diskless deployments, NoTouch can be network booted with the integrated PXE server in the management VA.

NoTouch Desktop enables BYOD

Another common concern facing IT is the growing trend of faculty and staff bringing personal devices into the office, or using their personal devices to work from home. Faculty and staff want and expect to perform integral tasks on personal devices, either at home, in the office, or on the go. Stratodesk's software supports BYOD to meet advanced requirements without opening up potential security threats. Faculty and staff can simply boot NoTouch OS in Live Mode from a USB stick in order to access important work files wherever they are at. When they are done, they can exit their session and remove the USB stick. Native operating systems won't be affected.

NoTouch OS Increases Security

NoTouch OS installs directly onto all of your hardware, bare metal, transforming your devices into high performing, NoTouch endpoints. Cancel your malware and antivirus contracts and save money –because NoTouch OS is Linux based, it is impervious to common malware or security exploits.

Connects to all VDI Environments

NoTouch OS also has the clients for all major environments prebuilt into the OS. This means whatever environment you or your solutions provider are using, NoTouch is ready and able to make the connection without any effort needed from your IT staff or end users out of the box.

On–Premises or Cloud-Based Administration

NoTouch is the only endpoint management software that can be run either on premises or from the Cloud. With NoTouch Cloud, management updates are applied automatically, appliances are actively managed, and home machines and BYOD are enabled without opening your network up to unnecessary security risks.

About Stratodesk

Stratodesk is the world's leading endpoint OS and management solution. It is used by government and healthcare organizations, banks, SMBs and large enterprises to eliminate cost and scalability obstacles facing their complex network of devices. By delivering the only management software for mixed environments of x86, ARM and Raspberry Pi devices, Stratodesk is reinventing endpoint computing for enterprise IoT and VDI. Our cutting edge, linux-based solution, NoTouch, is hardware-agnostic and runs on the Raspberry Pi.

🌐 **www.stratodesk.com**
✉ **contact@stratodesk.com**
US: 🇺🇸 **+1 (415) 946 4029**
EU: 🇪🇺 **+43 (463) 890298**