London Metropolitan University Case Study

How Axess Systems implemented a Thin Client solution to London Metropolitan University, which enabled them to provide effective and secure online library services.

Background

Data Security, access and permissions are a constant challenge for education establishments. One particular area where this is prevalent is how to provide students with online access to library resources, without them being able to use the desktop device for general non-library purposes.

As London Metropolitan University is the largest "single university" in London, serving more than 34,000 students, this issue was particularly significant.

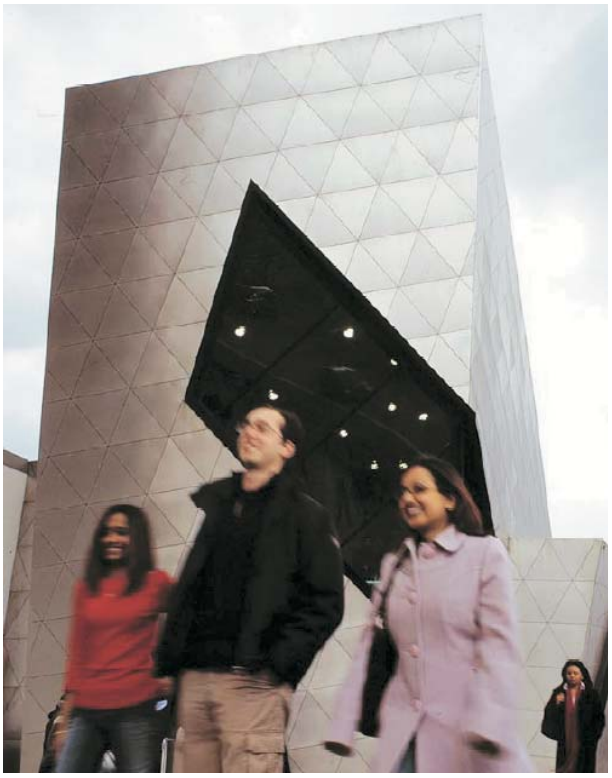
The Situation

London Metropolitan University needed to replace the ageing desktop terminals in their Learning and Library Centres in order to offer students access to their vast range of electronic e-journals available on the Internet.

The library terminals are in heavy use, and therefore it is essential that the students can't use them for any other purpose, so the University needed to find a solution that would enable them to 'lock down' the devices to prevent this happening.

Additionally, as the devices are in public spaces issues surrounding the possibility of theft and vandalism needed to be a consideration.

The ICT department enlisted the help of the Axess Systems, to help advise them on which solution which would be the best way forward.



The Solution

As the University was already well experienced of utilising Thin Clients in other areas, it was easy for them to see the benefits of implementing Thin Client devices in this environment.

Axess System was able to recommend a high performing Thin Client device, which would facilitate modern internet browsing, and also run Adobe Reader® enabling students to direct access thousands of e-journals.

The Benefits

"The project has gone very smoothly. We have had great support from Axess Systems at all stages, and their advice has been invaluable."

'Locked down' secure environment
The solution recommended by Axess Systems achieved London Metropolitan University's core objective of enabling online access to the library systems, whilst not allowing any non-library services to be carried out.

Reduction in theft and vandalism
As Thin Client devices require a complete Server Based Network to operate, their intrinsic value on the street is virtually nil. And since the Thin Clients have been installed not one of the units has been vandalised nor stolen.

Discreet presence
As a Thin Client devise is very small it is ideally suited to a library environment, as it doesn't use much desk space, allowing the students to bring all of the resources to one desk.

Reliability
Thin Clients are extremely reliable, on average nine times more so than a PC. So as the Library services are in constant heavy demand, the University is able to provide a near maximum availability to the students.

Plug and Play replacement
In the rare occurrence that a Thin Client device has failed, it has been replaced immediately, and as the unit requires virtually no set up, the unit is simply connected to the network and it's back available.

Conclusion:

The ICT Department at London Metropolitan University highlighted that in addition to all of the benefits listed above, that using Thin Client devices as opposed to PC's, was much more cost effective. In addition, they are easier to manage and deploy, thereby taking less management time and resources.

Mike O' Reilly Head of Intranet Services at London Metropolitan University concluded: "The project has gone very smoothly. We have had great support from Axess Systems at all stages, and their advice has been invaluable."

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