



District Doubles Its Computing Power with Boot Camp and iMac

Cartersville, GA—When Technology Coordinator Sheryl McDonald demonstrated an iMac running both Mac and Windows applications, administrators with Cartersville City Schools (CCS) sat up and took notice. Though the district had long used the Mac and Mac OS X as its platform of choice for student and academic computing, the Information Technology (IT) staff was just hours away from signing the purchase order for a large group of Windows-based computers for teachers and staff. Then McDonald showed that Mac OS X's Boot Camp would allow an Intel-based iMac to run—on either platform—the Windows-specific applications needed by administrators.

Boot Camp, which is included in Leopard, the newest version of Mac OS X, provides unprecedented computing flexibility. The tool supplies all of the drivers needed to install and run the Windows XP operating system on an Intel-based Mac.* Once Leopard has been installed, a user need only hold down the “option” key at startup to choose between Mac OS X and Windows. After starting up, the Mac will run Windows completely natively. Returning to the Mac platform is as easy as restarting the computer.

Since CCS's administrative systems—and its high school—previously were Windows-based, Dr. Howard Hinesley, CCS superintendent, thought it would make financial sense to purchase more PCs. “We were looking at a major expenditure to refresh all of our old computers, which we wanted to do quickly,” Hinesley says. “We had a number of systems—our data warehouse, our financial systems, and other applications—that were Windows-based. But when Sheryl did the demo of Boot Camp on the iMac, I thought that was a fabulous solution to our situation.”

Easy iMac Integration with Active Directory

Another advantage of the iMac purchase was the computers' easy integration of Microsoft's Active Directory Service, a distributed directory service that is included in the Windows operating system. Since CCS had already implemented Active Directory, by simply adding the tool to the iMac computers, McDonald and her team were able to give teachers and staff the freedom to use any application—or platform—desired, without costly upgrades to their existing infrastructure.

Says McDonald, “We set the computers up so that there's one system log-in. Then users can log in from either a Mac or a PC, and their files are mapped so they can create something on the Windows side, back it up to their user folder on the network, and then log in on the Mac side and be off and running with it.”



Objectives

- Replace all faculty and staff computers in school district
- Enable users to work with virtually any desired applications
- Support users who prefer to work on either the Mac or Windows platform

Solution

- 4410 Intel-based iMac computers with built-in AirPort Extreme wireless** networking
- Mac OS X with Boot Camp
- iLife '06
- Parallels***, Active Directory, Microsoft Office

Results

- District derived significant savings with Intel-based iMac computers
- No infrastructure modifications were necessary to support wireless environment
- Users can work in their preferred computing environment, with their familiar applications

“Users can log in from either a Mac or a PC ... Their files are mapped so they can create something on the Windows side, back it up to their user folder on the network, and then log in on the Mac side and be off and running with it.”

Sheryl McDonald, Technical Coordinator,
Cartersville City Schools

Mac Offers Complete Package

McDonald says the decision to go with the iMac computers made strong financial sense. With two operating systems on one slim computer, CCS essentially doubled its computing capacity with half of the hardware. Plus, the discovery that the computers included a variety of extras—such as the built-in iSight video cameras, and the iLife software that could be integrated with the curriculum—made the Apple purchase still more attractive.

“Also, what our students are doing with the iLife applications is amazing!” adds McDonald. “With tools like iPhoto and iMovie, they’re creating presentations and doing projects that they never would have done before. Having such a ‘modern’ computer in the classroom has been a huge plus.”

In addition to the cost and space savings, CCS faculty and staff are enjoying the convenience of a wireless environment. With the built-in wireless capabilities of the iMac, teachers can place their computers anywhere desired.

Schools May Like Parallels, Too

McDonald suggests that schools considering a purchase of Intel-based Macintosh computers may find Parallels Desktop for the Mac a good fit for their infrastructure. Taking advantage of Intel Core Duo Virtualization Technology, Parallels allows users to run Windows and its applications in a virtualized environment in Mac OS X, without requiring rebooting. Parallels can be run on any Intel-powered Mac.

“Schools should first test out Parallels, to make sure it works in their environment,” McDonald advises. “Eventually we hope to put Parallels on every machine. Then, no matter what version of an application someone has, if they’re more comfortable on the other platform, they can just move right on over without having to restart their computer.”

The End of the Platform Wars

Now that CCS has deployed its full complement of iMac computers, McDonald and Hinesley say the “platform wars” are a thing of the past. Instead, teachers and staff are enjoying an unprecedented level of flexibility. In Hinesley’s opinion, this directly benefits every student in the district.

“Ultimately, we’re always looking at what’s best for our students,” says Hinesley. “Buying the iMac computers indirectly benefits our students, because when the teachers are happy, the kids are going to be even happier. The feedback I’ve gotten from both has been extremely positive. It’s all turned out really well, and those who used to be die-hard PC users have been very impressed.”

“It’s been a great experience,” McDonald agrees. “I haven’t had any complaints about the Mac. In fact, people who used to be so adamant about running Windows, and normally badmouthed the Mac, no longer have anything to say. Thanks to Boot Camp, now we’re able to use Macs in places that previously required a Windows machine.”

“ Now we have the be-all, end-all package: We’re enjoying cost savings, space savings, and there’s no longer any argument over what platform someone wants to use.”

Sheryl McDonald

Learn More

To see more success stories or to find out how to transform your school into a 21st century learning environment with Apple learning solutions, visit www.apple.com/education/k12/ or call 800-800-2775 to speak to an Apple education representative.

*Boot Camp users must provide their own copy of the Windows XP operating system.

**Internet access requires a wireless-enabled computer, a base station or other access point, and Internet access (fees may apply). Some ISPs are not currently compatible with AirPort. Range may vary with site conditions.

***The mention of third-party products is for informational purposes only and represents neither an endorsement nor a recommendation. Parallels software is sold separately.