

Dallas  
Independent  
School  
District



## Dallas ISD Reduces Account Creation Time by 50% using DSRAZOR

### ***Enhances Account Management for 160K Students***

#### **Background:**

Dallas Independent School District (ISD) had significant demands with regard to student account creation and management. With over 200 schools serving more than 160,000 students, the district's Network Services team needed to find a technical solution that would consistently support its NetWare server infrastructure.

A few years ago, the district went online with 140 school servers loaded with learning applications and other student resources. In order to fully leverage these valuable assets, the district would need to securely and successfully manage their student accounts. After struggling for some time with an unreliable freeware product, the network team chose Visual Click Software's DSRAZOR for eDirectory/NDS and NetWare to manage its student account needs. This solution has reduced account creation time by 50% and has significantly enhanced the account management capabilities of campus technologists.

#### **Situation: The Account Creation Bottleneck**

After Dallas ISD implemented 140 NetWare servers and loaded them with learning resources, pressure quickly mounted on the network team to ensure that students could access these valuable resources. With a student body of 160,000, the district realized it needed a consistent and dependable method of creating and managing student accounts.

Within months of rolling out the new servers, the district's account creation process had become riddled with problems and uncertainties. The freeware product that the campus technologists used to create the accounts failed frequently. "Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn't," explains Kevin Collier, Dallas ISD's Principal Network Technician. "We needed something that would work consistently."

The Network Services team was using the freeware product to create multiple accounts simultaneously. However, its repeated failures rendered it useless. While Novell's iManager tool enabled new account creation, it could not be

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used to create accounts on a large scale. “That was a big deal,” says Collier. “There are a lot of services on the servers, and the kids couldn’t access them unless they could log in.”

Furthermore, the district wanted to provide the campus technologists with a straightforward password- and account-management solution. Whether they were enabling or disabling student accounts, simplicity and effectiveness were paramount. Unfortunately, iManager, which had been employed for these tasks, was neither intuitive nor easy to use. “We realized we had a problem,” adds Collier.

### **Action: Embracing DSRAZOR**

Realizing they needed a stable and effective solution, the district’s Network Services groups began exploring alternatives. Some products proved extremely expensive; others lacked relevant capabilities. Visual Click, however, represented a long-standing Novell Technology partner with a product that was highly relevant and easy to use.

Collier was particularly impressed with the service and support levels available to prospects that had not yet purchased the product. “Normally, you are on your own with an evaluation product,” he says. “But we had access to tech support as if we owned the product. In fact, Visual Click helped us when we were stuck. They did an online demo, and we were sufficiently impressed because they knew NetWare. A lot of companies say they support NetWare, but the truth is, their knowledge tends to be pretty limited.”

In this case, the district had the applets customized for their own use by drawing on Visual Click’s support resources, including DSRAZOR’s patented Designer. The Network Services team was impressed with the product’s ability to customize navigation so that campus technologists could access areas of their own school’s network without having to navigate through the district’s overall network structure. “It was a selling point for us that we could control down to that level how the software would react,” says Collier, adding that the ability to create executable files that could be easily distributed represented another important benefit for the team.

The district is also highly complimentary of the Visual Click support staff. “They have been absolutely wonderful and very quick,” Collier adds. “When we asked about features, they were upfront about whether they would support them and when they would be available. They didn’t gloss over our requests and questions.”

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## Result: Cutting Account Creation Time in Half

Upon rolling out the new software, response from campus technologists – who comprise teachers as well as technical specialists – was uniformly positive. They appreciated the intuitive, “point and click” nature of DSRAZOR and the fact that it provides a single point of management. “They didn’t have to go between two applications anymore,” says Collier. “The response we got from campus techs was very positive. Without this application, they couldn’t have been as quick as they were able to be.”

In terms of creating accounts, the introduction of DSRAZOR has resulted in “significantly faster” turnaround time. “It would take 30-60 minutes using the other product,” explains Collier. “Now, it takes just 15-30 minutes to create their accounts, depending on the size of the school. That has cut the time in half.”

In addition, DSRAZOR enabled the campus technologists to manage remote troubleshooting in a simple, streamlined and intuitive fashion. Being able to avoid Novell’s ConsoleOne enhances their productivity and effectiveness.

“It is a phenomenal product,” says Collier. “We were amazed at how much easier it made things for our users. Creating documentation was easy to do. Everything is graphical. It has accelerated the learning process. It’s all very intuitive – all point and click.”

Collier was also impressed with the friendly and facilitative nature of Visual Click’s team. “Salespeople did not push us,” he says. “They were very helpful in steering us in the right direction. We have experienced pushy software salesmen. With Visual Click, we had 100% support while evaluating the product. I have never come across another company that approaches its prospective customers like that. They would do a demo for whoever needed to see it -- as many times as we wanted. We brought in upper management and management from our technical assistance center. They were very helpful in getting them onboard and that nailed it.”

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**DSRAZOR**  
for eDirectory

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## About Visual Click Software, Inc

Envisioned in 1996 and incorporated in 1999, Visual Click is the leader and pioneer in visually customizable computer network security access management and reporting applications.

**Network Security Access Management:** Our patented Visual Designer Technology allows for customer- specific applications to be developed in minutes rather than days, weeks or months. This powerful technology creates a new paradigm in network security access management. Previous technology either required use of overly large and complex 'consoles' that performed slowly and required product-specific training or required customized programming.

Our technology allows customers to create exactly what they need to control their network security access management without burdening the Administrator or requiring custom computer programming costs.

**Network Security Reporting:** Our patented Visual Designer Technology allows for customer-defined reports to be developed in minutes with very little training. This powerful technology allows the Network Administrator to focus on the important matters of securing a network. With minor customizations, each Network Security Report can simultaneously be used for Network Security Access Management. Each Network Security Report can also be used to change the Network Security issues it uncovers. This important technology solves two problems at the same time, namely, reporting about Network Security non-compliance and enforcing corporate Network Security policy.

**Customer Benefits:** Exceeding customer expectations is our number one goal. We know time is a resource that most IT professionals have in short supply. For this reason, our software is designed to reduce errors and minimize training costs, thereby freeing up valuable time to focus on more mission-critical tasks. From simplifying user management and maintaining regulatory compliance, to preparing for migration and delegating helpdesk duties, our software empowers our customers by saving them time and money associated with managing their networked environments.