



With a Help Desk that can competently address problems “on the fly,” the IT group’s analysts and technicians can devote their time to high-level tasks.

UNM Hospitals Relies on DSRAZOR for eDirectory to Empower Help Desk and Enhance IT Performance

Calls Visual Click Support “Extremely Responsive”

Background:

UNM Hospitals in Albuquerque, New Mexico is recognized as the leading trauma center in the region. Part of the University of New Mexico, the hospital also boasts a first-rate Information Technology (IT) organization.

One of the IT organization’s strengths is its responsiveness. Using Visual Click’s DSRAZOR for eDirectory, the IT group has succeeded in creating a well respected Help Desk that is fast and effective at addressing problems “on the fly”. As a result, the IT group’s analysts and technicians can devote their time to high-level tasks.

Challenge: Strengthening the Help Desk

Seven years ago, members of the IT staff realized that their existing tools were not sufficient to handle the expeditious network administration and Help Desk functions that the UNM Hospitals’ 4,000 employees required. While the organization was committed to Novell Directory Service, GroupWise and ZENworks, Novell’s native tool, ConsoleOne, had proven too cumbersome for many of its daily system and account management tasks.

What this IT group needed was a powerful utility that would integrate with ZENworks and handle an array of Help Desk activities, including:

- Managing and controlling workstations remotely
- Changing passwords
- Enabling and disabling NDS accounts
- Managing distribution lists in GroupWise
- Updating accounts, user phone numbers and role changes

These demands needed to be addressed with the help of a clear, effective and intuitive tool. “We had previously used ConsoleOne,” says Mike Biedermann, Network Systems Analyst at UNM Hospitals. “But it was difficult to use, and the interface presented much more functionality than we needed.”

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In short, the existing tools created a challenge for the organization. “Our objective was to give appropriate rights to the right people,” he adds. “We wanted to get more granular in terms of the functionality that was available. We hoped to provide no more and no less than what they needed to do their job effectively. ConsoleOne gives you a huge array of tools and you must be heavily versed in them to use them effectively. It wasn’t appropriate for our Help Desk team.”

Action: Investing in DSRAZOR

The IT organization of UNM Hospitals invested in Visual Click Software’s DSRAZOR for eDirectory in July of 2000. The group used DSRAZOR to create customized applets and adapt existing ones to match its Network Directory Services environment. The NDS displayed the information the Help Desk would need to accomplish its daily tasks—and no more than was necessary.

“We created a group specifically for the Help Desk,” says Biedermann. “We then created application groups that would present [this Help Desk group] with the DSRAZOR applets they needed. If you were in the Help Desk group, we gave you rights and presented applications you would need when you logged on. It wasn’t all that complicated.”

Biedermann was impressed by DSRAZOR’s simplicity and ease of use. “The product gives you all the tools you need to customize these applets,” he says. “You can create executables that you can present as an application object through ZENworks. That provides more flexibility for the Help Desk team. Instead of worrying about being on a specific workstation, the Help Desk professional can be anywhere. They have the apps they need once they are assigned to a specific group.”

Meanwhile, Systems Analysts are able to use dozens of applets in DSRAZOR to extract different types of information. “It’s a cool tool,” says Biedermann. “It offers an effective way to find information on a directory and on the network. For instance, they have used it for reports to find out number of users, what applications they are running, and how much network storage they are using.”

Biedermann also offers a positive assessment of his group’s relationship with the Visual Click Customer Support team. “Their service is extremely impressive,” he says. “If I contact them and need help with an applet, they are quick to respond. Someone gets back to me within the space of an hour, usually. They are one of the of the most responsive Tech Support groups I’ve ever dealt with—maybe the most.”

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Results: Strengthening IT Performance

UNM Hospitals' IT organization has realized some notable payoffs from its investment in DSRAZOR. The most significant of these is the ability of the organization's Help Desk to perform at an extremely high level, providing top quality service to internal end-users. Instead of having to call on expert technicians, Help Desk professionals can now launch applets on their desktops, thereby enabling them to handle users' issues with alacrity.

"Problems don't have to be escalated beyond the first phone call," says Biedermann. "If you are an end-user calling the Help Desk, you just want your problem fixed. You just want it done. DSRAZOR enables quick and easy resolution of simple problems."

Such capabilities mean that the IT organization is more productive and more responsive. "If it helps the user, it helps us," he adds. "We are not backlogged with requests that can be easily resolved. We are fixing problems on the fly. The user appreciates it and we, as an IT organization, appreciate it."

Biedermann notes that "speed of resolution is the key" to the IT organization's performance. "DSRAZOR has helped enormously," he adds. "Someone without a huge amount of training can do something quickly and easily to help everyone involved. It empowers the Help Desk tremendously."

Considering that the Help Desk "is the face of the IT organization", its performance is vital to the perception of the IT group as a whole. "If they do a good job, we all look good," he adds.

Moreover, Help Desk efficiency means that more time and resources can be reinvested in higher order IT challenges. "If you don't have to spend your time on lots of mundane things, you can invest it elsewhere," says Biedermann. "If the Help Desk can do something quickly and easily, the technician can work on a larger problem. Anything that empowers each level better helps the organization. If we empower our Help Desk, this helps the technician, which frees up analysts."

As Biedermann explains, "DSRAZOR has had a very positive impact on our organization. It's a great product that has allowed us to do things a lot more efficiently on every level. It helps everyone who uses it, and that's why we keep renewing it."

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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.

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