



Chemeketa Community College Enhances IT Productivity through Smart Delegation of Help Desk Tasks

DSRAZOR Eases Frustrations and Improves Performance

Background:

Founded in the early 1970s as a trade school, Chemeketa Community College has grown into a solid, well-respected community member. Now, the Salem, Oregon-based college is intent on developing an advanced IT operation that fully supports the demands of students, faculty and other staff.

Being able to smartly delegate Help Desk tasks is central to these efforts. By leveraging DSRAZOR for Windows, Network Administrators have increased overall IT productivity and performance.

Challenge: Interfacing with Active Directory

With 15,000-20,000 registered students per year, Chemeketa is a highly successful community college with programs in computer science, health care, and an array of office occupations and technical trades.

The school's IT staff of 28 is charged with ensuring that students and staff have a comfortable, effective and well-supported work environment. However, major transitions can put stress on such situations. Such was the case in 2001 as the organization began migrating from Novell to Windows while Network Administrators made the shift from eDirectory to Active Directory.

"We needed a way to make the admin job easier and less frustrating," says J.D. Craig, Chemeketa's Research and Design Administrator. "The production rate was dropping continuously. We needed to take more advantage of Active Directory, but it was a struggle. We needed a better user interface."

Action: Investing in DSRAZOR for Windows

With the Information Technology department facing increasing frustrations and dropping productivity, the group was compelled to acquire tools that would support its management of Active Directory's capabilities. After exploring a variety of such products, Chemeketa ultimately decided to purchase Visual Click's DSRAZOR for Windows.

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J.D. Craig,
Chemeketa's
Research and Design
Administrator

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“The tool could do several tasks that standard Active Directory tools did not provide,” says Craig. “With a little bit of training on the new user interface, it promised to lighten the administrative load of the IT group’s Network Administrators.”

Currently, DSRAZOR for Windows is licensed for 4,000 user objects and is being used actively by Chemeketa Community College’s IT staff. Over the past few years, the group has used the product for multiple application and report rollouts.

For instance, the IT staff has applied the tool’s capabilities for resetting passwords, identifying group memberships and checking logon/logoff times – at various points, working with Visual Click’s Technical Support team to develop specialized applets.

Results: Performance Gains Through Smart Delegation

DSRAZOR’s ability to delegate administrative tasks to Help Desk technicians—without overwhelming them with a complex application or providing inappropriate access—has been vital to the college’s success with the product. “We have been able to take some of the workload that administrators have traditionally had to do and spread it out to technicians,” says Craig. “We can give the technicians more responsibility without overwhelming them. This allows us to deliver high service levels while maintaining security.”

Technicians now have the ability to reset passwords, for instance, without having to receive extensive training in a new tool or obtain extensive levels of access. “That was one of the big features that sold me,” says Craig. “Technicians shouldn’t have more access than what they need or have been trained for.”

Further, it has enhanced the productivity of troubleshooting efforts, enabling the team to accomplish tasks far more rapidly than they would have been able to when using Active Directory’s standard utilities.

For instance, DSRAZOR can help the administrator check nested groups when addressing a privileges problem. If an account is nested in a group that has an “explicit deny” rule on it, the administrator can quickly identify the issue, override it and provide the appropriate permissions.

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Another capability this IT group values is the ability to run reports dealing with a variety of issues, such as computer connections, user objects and active user accounts. “That’s a big thing for us because Active Directory won’t do the counts – or multi-level queries – that we need,” says Craig.

Such efforts have reduced the frustrations and enhanced the productivity of network administration. By making it easier to handle troubleshooting tasks and generate necessary reports, the team is able to enhance performance and get faster results. It also alleviates personal stress and contributes to higher morale on the team.

All these capabilities ultimately result in a better client experience. Because Network Administrators and Help Desk technicians have access to relevant tools, they can ensure that faculty, students and other users receive excellent service. “If we can do our job proficiently, it makes the client happier,” says Craig. “They don’t have to wait for results. They are taken care of in a more expedient manner.”

Visual Click’s support team, meanwhile, has offered rapid turnaround as well. “They are good about straightening things out,” explains Craig. “I tell them what I need and within 24 hours, they send me a dialogue component or refer me to a dialogue component. They are easy to work with and help me get the results I’m seeking.”

Summing up, Craig makes the case that DSRAZOR is a “definite, must-have tool for an administrator. It has provided us avenues that weren’t available, short of writing a new API for Active Directory. It has proven itself beyond a doubt.”

He expects to find new ways of using the product to enhance operations in the future, further increasing the organization’s ability to adapt and smartly delegate tasks. “There’s a great deal of potential because the interface is so easy to code. We are still exploring where we can go and what we can do.”

“Our clients don’t have to wait for results. They are taken care of in a more expedient manner.”

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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.

Also, so our customers can get the exact product functionality they need, we offer our Create My Solution™ service for expert custom reports and management applets.

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.

Visual Click's support team is "easy to work with and they help me get the results I'm seeking."

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