

Jackson State University

Increased Security, Simplified Maintenance Deliver a New Level of PC Performance



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OVERVIEW

► The Challenge

Deploy a high performance end-user computing solution that increases uptime and security while simplifying management and maintenance.

► The Solution

Install ClearCube PC Blades throughout the University's computer labs and faculty offices.

► The Benefit

Increase security and uptime of computing assets and lower support costs.

Founded in 1877, Jackson State University educates a diverse population of over 7,000 students. The Mississippi school attracts students from all over the globe with its broad range of baccalaureate programs and a variety of master and doctoral programs.

Old Equipment in a New Facility?

"When Jackson State University completed a new building for its School of Business, the school saw the perfect opportunity to upgrade its PC infrastructure," says Michael Robinson from the Security and Emerging Technologies Department. The School of Business had been using traditional PCs, and they posed a significant management challenge.

"We have one technician assigned to the entire School of Business," explains Robinson, citing the difficulty of keeping up with software upgrades, troubleshooting, and general repairs. "At any given time, at least ten percent of our PCs were down, whether due to hardware, software, or other issues."

Security was another key challenge for Jackson State University, as the constant cycle of students using the business school's computer labs left the PCs vulnerable to theft and damage.

The academic environment also presented obstacles to regular maintenance and troubleshooting. "Our technician would have to go to the faculty members' offices to upgrade software or equipment," says

Robinson. "But professors have varying office hours that made it difficult for the technician to easily access PCs."

Studying Up on ClearCube Technology

Robinson researched alternatives that would provide the school the performance it needed while solving the critical challenges of maintenance and security. What he found was ClearCube. "I had the ClearCube system on-site for a week, and I knew immediately that this is what I was looking for," says Robinson.

ClearCube delivers fully functional Intel®-based Pentium 4™ computing to the end user's workstation from a secure, centralized location. Instead of a traditional, bulky PC box at the end user's desk, there is only a keyboard, a monitor, a mouse and a small User Port. The User Port is connected via existing cable infrastructure to a PC Blade that is mounted in a centrally located rack. Each PC Blade contains all standard PC components, including the latest Intel® processors, memory, hard drives and video cards.

"Even though it was a little more expensive than other solutions, I knew it would save money in the long term because it is so easy to maintain and manage and requires less support staff," says Robinson.

ClearCube Gets High Marks

Jackson State University deployed ClearCube PC Blades throughout its School of Business, including five computer labs and all faculty and staff offices. Robinson says that the benefits of the ClearCube solution were immediately apparent. "Because the PC Blades are in a central rack, they are much easier to manage and much more secure."

Installing or upgrading software on the PC Blades is now a simple process that takes much less time than previous procedures. "Even the implementation was a breeze," says Robinson. "It's the simplest thing I've ever seen." He estimates that installing the PC Blades requires at least 50 percent less time than installing traditional PCs. "You slide the PC Blades in the rack, then all you have to do is go to the user's desktop and plug in the monitor, keyboard, mouse, and User Port, and you're done!"

Robinson states that the ClearCube solution has been accepted very well on campus. "The students like it because the computer labs are much quieter. Faculty and staff like it because there is more space at their desks, and they don't have to be interrupted for upgrades or repairs. Our technician loves it because he can manage all the users from his desk."

"The ClearCube management software is very impressive," says PC Technician Gregory Anderson. "It's the secret sauce that brings the whole solution together. It allows me to run everything from a console without ever having to visit the users."

Jackson State University has been so impressed with the ClearCube Solution that it plans to roll out the solution on other parts of campus.

"To sum it up," says Robinson, "I think everybody should be knocking down your door to get this product."



ClearCube keeps computers up and running at Jackson State University