

Texas A&M University–Kingsville

PROFILE



Industry

Education

Headquarters

Kingsville, Texas

Employees

1,100 full-time employees

Students

6,600

Web Site

<http://www.tamuk.edu>

THE NUMBERS

- 240 nonpersistent VMware View images for student use, with about 160 more planned
- 50 persistent View images for staff use
- 4,000+ endpoints
- 95+ virtualized servers

IN BRIEF

Objectives

- Lengthen refresh/replace cycle for hardware in the field and reduce space, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning requirements
- Support student and employee demands for updated applications, speedy processing and reliable performance

Solution

VMware View 4.6

Business Impact

- Control over endpoint authentication increased
- Hardware refresh/replace cycle extended from 4 years for PCs to a targeted 7 years for replacement zero clients
- 90 days required for choosing and deploying VMware View—half the time typically needed for a comparable campus-wide IT initiative
- Security and risk assessment improved; security patches installed campus-wide in minutes; reduced threat of PC data theft
- Total cost of ownership reduced
- IT staff time used more efficiently

With VMware View, University Offers 7,000 Users Speedy, Reliable Access to Latest Applications and Data

“VMware View allows us to maintain a competitive edge by providing the freshest applications and operating systems to users. If we had to run around and update our 4,000 PCs with the latest web browsers and versions of Microsoft Office, we’d never keep up.”

— Robert Miller, Associate CIO, Texas A&M University–Kingsville

Does any population demand more from its technology than university students? In exchange for tuition and fees, they expect a satisfying educational experience delivered via fast, reliable, feature-rich technology. They want access on campus and from a variety of devices including their iPads.

To meet the anytime, anywhere demands of its 6,600 students and 1,100 employees, Texas A&M University–Kingsville turned to VMware View™ desktop virtualization for an agile and adaptive solution. View addresses end-users’ technology expectations while enabling the university to gain a market edge, upgrade its security profile, and centralize and streamline the maintenance of 4,000 PCs across campus—all while controlling costs.

Benefits to Students and Employees

At present, some 240 View virtual images are available to students at Texas A&M University–Kingsville, primarily at zero-client stations in lab classrooms. But older PCs across campus also provide a portal to those frequently refreshed View images. And the university is planning two rollouts of approximately 160 more virtual images in public areas.

“The target end-user for VMware View is the student who accesses labs for supplemental work,” says Bob Paulson, associate vice president of technology and CIO at Texas A&M University–Kingsville. But any student can access View with a unique login—to write papers, pay bills or register for classes.

“Students using virtual desktops get a more powerful, faster computer (than they did using older PCs),” says Robert Miller, associate CIO. “That means a better learning experience, with more capabilities.” Students also save money on software and hardware.

For university employees, VMware View means faster, more reliable access to 50 fixed images offering upgraded software, which they can tap into on campus, from home or via mobile devices.

Business Benefits

From an IT perspective, the primary benefits of deploying View involve efficiency, better use of staff time, and maximizing available memory, speed and functionality. Rather than manually install software on individual machines, IT now makes the change on a server, which promptly delivers the desired image to everyone.

VMware View also supports the university’s high- and low-level security objectives. “View allows us to push out security patches and applications (across campus),” Miller says, enhancing the university’s risk-assessment profile. At the same time, the threat of losing data to a thief has declined because—unlike PCs—the zero clients running View contain no data.

“Virtualizing with VMware allows us to have the latest in speed, memory and efficiency and to push that out to our users. That’s a big deal for us.”

— Robert Miller, Associate CIO,
Texas A&M University-Kingsville

“The President’s Cabinet likes VMware desktop virtualization because now I’m asking for less money.”

— Bob Paulson, Associate Vice President/CIO,
Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Reducing hardware requirements offers other benefits. Zero clients, which contain no underlying operating system or CPU, last up to seven years—compared to four years for PCs—and require less space and electricity.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville also found that the multistep process for upgrading to View moved more quickly than anticipated. “A campus-wide initiative like this might be expected to take six months, including researching, engineering and budgeting,” Paulson says. “Our process of choosing and deploying VMware View took us 90 days.”

Partnership with TIG

Texas A&M University-Kingsville credits Technology Integration Group (TIG) with helping choose the right technology and deploying it quickly. Although the university initially leaned toward Citrix Systems Inc., “TIG was able to provide us with a wider range of solutions that might better fit our needs,” Paulson says. TIG installed a Lakeside Software tool on the university’s system to capture resource and utilization data. TIG then set up a proof of concept and tested several options, with VMware functionality emerging as the best fit.

Also, because the university had earlier virtualized servers with VMware, “we decided that View would be easier to understand and to deploy (than Citrix),” says Jesus Hernandez, senior systems administrator.

Hernandez notes that TIG’s ongoing support has been vital. “TIG has gone above and beyond, providing expertise after the fact. Their support is accessible, and we’ve had good communications with their technicians.”

Why VMware?

In addition to enabling a quicker, easier deployment, View offers a PC-over-IP protocol that Hernandez prefers to available Citrix protocols. He looks forward to bandwidth-utilization protocol enhancements in View 5.

With TIG’s support, Texas A&M University-Kingsville began a pilot with VMware vCenter Operations™, which Miller says will “allow us to monitor and administer from the same panel, and will give us a more detailed look at use, availability and capacity of any deployed element. It’ll allow us to maximize our virtual resources.”

For the highest levels at the university, however, one consideration trumps all others. “The President’s Cabinet likes VMware desktop virtualization,” Paulson says, “because now I’m asking for less money.”

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW		
<p>VMware Products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VMware ESX 3i VMware vSphere 4.1 VMware View 4.6 VMware vCenter Operations (in pilot phase) 	<p>Applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microsoft Office suite IBM SPSS Statistics Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome GoPrint Hummingbird 3270 <p>Education-Specific Applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SunGard Banner, Luminis 	<p>Platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dell R710 servers Dell EqualLogic PS4000 and PS6000 storage devices Wyse CxO Samsung NC190 Foundry/Cisco network

