



Solving Desktop Challenges in Education

A  **DESKTOP AUTHORITY**® Vertical Whitepaper

Solving Desktop Challenges in Education

Just like any other workplace, Higher Education (HED) and even K-12 institutions rely heavily on technology, and a key part of their infrastructure is a network of Windows computers. The IT departments that manage them have always faced an extraordinary range of demands, but with the current economic downturn there is new pressure to do more with less, to roll-out new projects and initiatives, tighten security, deliver updates and provide greater mobility to students and faculty while reducing the bottom-line. To meet these challenges IT departments need to automate and centralize labor-intensive functions and eliminate time-consuming manual tasks, whilst achieving greater security and lower energy costs.

This paper will address how to achieve some of these goals in the area of Windows desktop management in an education setting. ScriptLogic has a long track record of helping IT professionals in the education sector, and provides solutions targeted at the over-worked, under-resourced administrator with a wide variety of responsibilities. ScriptLogic's Desktop Authority allows administrators to address these challenges with a solution that is low in complexity yet high in value. Desktop Authority provides HED/K-12 organizations the granular control they need of all Windows desktops and applications helping them to increase efficiency, reduce cost, meet internal requirements, and enhance overall security.

The Challenge of Windows Desktops in Education

Management of Windows desktops in an educational setting presents a number of challenges, some of which are unique to environments such as colleges, universities and K-12 facilities and others which are seen across all Windows desktop-based enterprises. High ratios of users/desktops to administrators, lack of in-depth IT knowledge, a highly transient user population and constant demands to improve the educational experience for all faculty and students as well as managing thousands of desktops with minimal manpower can be very difficult.

Some of the most frequently-voiced desktop management concerns from IT professionals working in education include:

- Inability to provide students and faculty members with rapid access a set of applications, resources and data as they roam between many different workstations, based on a centrally-managed policy
- Lack of IT resources devoted to managing desktops
- Limited security controls and control over incoming and outgoing data transfers

- Poor tools for providing remote assistance to user desktops, either because they require that the administrator takes over the whole desktop, or because they lack functionality and performance
- Risk of users removing sensitive data using USB drives and removable storage media
- Rising energy costs, and pressure to reduce wasted uptime
- Challenges in quickly re-imaging computers in labs to clean unwanted data and ensure all systems can be reverted to a known-good state

ScriptLogic's Desktop Authority

ScriptLogic's Desktop Authority allows educational institutions to effectively address these issues. It is optimized for the administrator who is over-worked and covers a wide variety of IT administration tasks, offering low complexity and high value. Desktop Authority provides HED/K-12 with centralized, granular control over all Windows desktops and applications, helping them to increase IT efficiency, meet internal requirements and enhance overall security.

In this document we shall highlight specific features within Desktop Authority that have been used by our many existing education sector customers to reduce the total cost of desktop ownership, improve efficiency and increase end-user satisfaction:

- 1) Provide a Consistent, Restricted, Task-Oriented Desktop for Students and Staff as they Roam
- 2) Reduce User Logon Times
- 3) Secure Desktops: Limit Unwanted Data Transfers, Missing Patches and User Privileges
- 4) Excellent Remote Assistance Functionality for one-on-one support
- 5) Reduce Energy Costs with Centralized Power Management
- 6) Automate Desktop Imaging

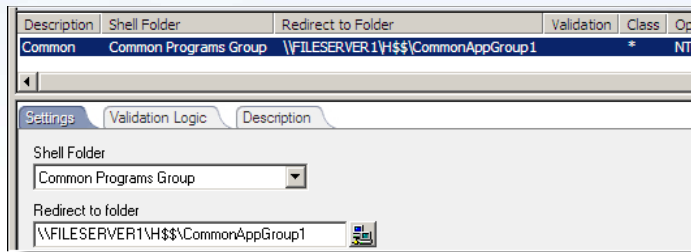
Let's look in more detail at each of these features.

Provide a Secure Consistent, Task-Oriented Desktop for Users as they Roam

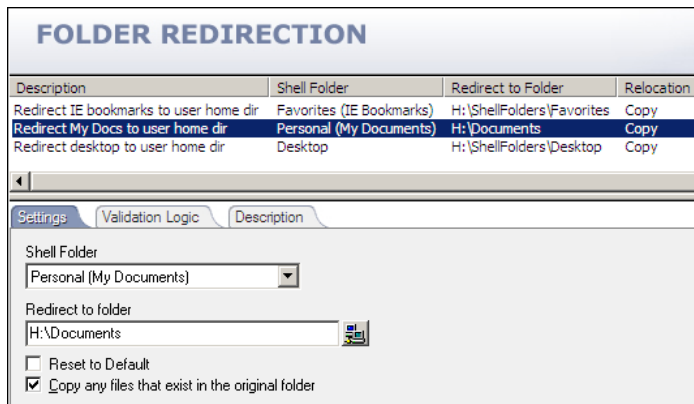
Students, teachers and other school faculty need the ability to roam between desktop locations all day. Moving from the classroom to the lab then to the library or the office--they need the ability to access important applications and resources the first time, every time. Additionally, they need a task-oriented workspace optimized for their requirements, no matter which workstation they are using.

Desktop Authority's comprehensive configuration options combined with its patented Validation Logic technology provides unlimited flexibility in providing a workspace optimized for each user, group, location and environment.

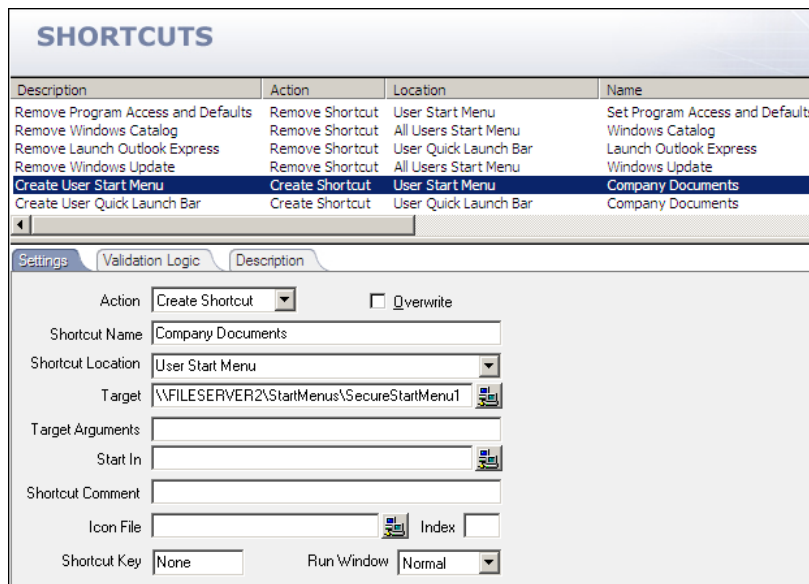
Example 1: Simplify and customize the applications available from the start menu and the desktop.



Example 2: Provide predefined sets of applications and data by redirecting common folders, such as the Common Programs group. Using Validation Logic, different sets of applications and data can be provided based on the user's group memberships, location, workstation, etc.



Example 3: Redirect user's information to centralized data stores so it is always rapidly available, even as they move around each building and between sites.



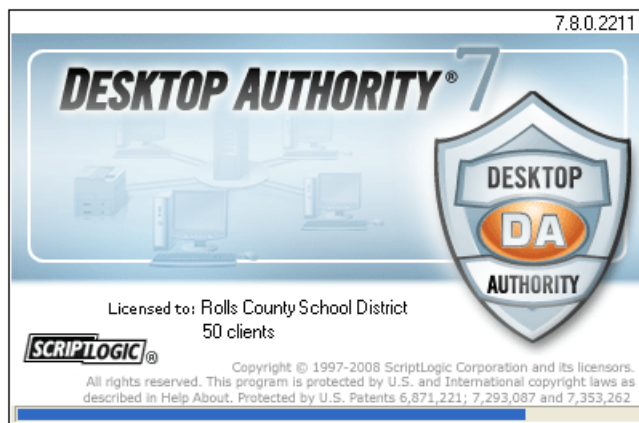
Fast Logons

Many organizations rely on logon scripts or large numbers of Group Policies to centrally configure desktops. These are slow, difficult to maintain and require costly expertise. Using Desktop Authority eliminates the need for logon scripts, decreases the complexity that often comes with Group Policy, and can dramatically reduce logon times.

In recent customer situations we have seen examples where Desktop Authority has reduced logon times for customers from **2 minutes to 25 seconds!**

Desktop Authority completely replaces complex logon scripts and vast numbers of Group Policies with centralized desktop configuration from an intuitive graphical interface.

The Desktop Authority splash screen is shown for a few seconds as the user's desktop is configured and personalized, replacing complex and slow logon scripts

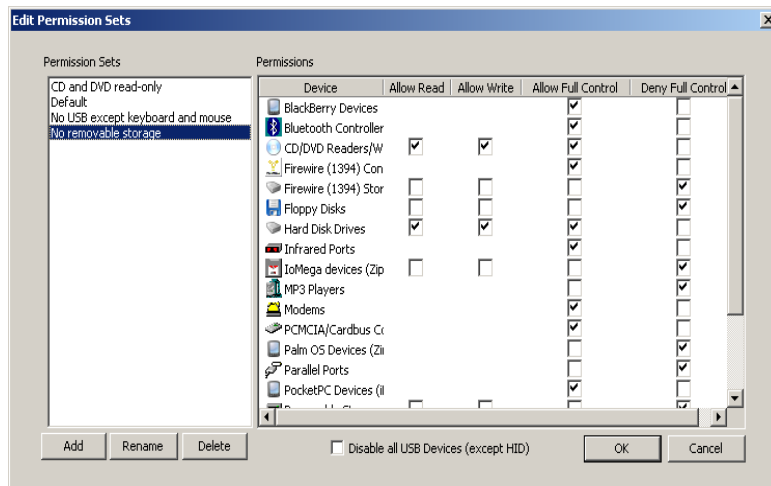


Secure Desktops: Limit Unwanted Data Transfers, Missing Patches and User Privileges

A very important aspect to securing the network in the education sector is avoiding data leakage. Even though some HED/K-12 organizations don't necessarily have to abide by the same compliance regulations as commercial enterprises do, avoiding unwanted disclosure of sensitive information is still important in order to mitigate risks. Financial loss and reputation damage are just a few of the possible fallouts schools face as it pertains to security breaches. Namely, Social Security Numbers being utilized as Student Identification Numbers and accidental/intentional student record disclosure are two very prevalent concerns for IT. And with the new Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), all student education records **MUST** be protected. This law applies to all schools that receive any financial support from the U.S. Department of Education. And that means that IT is responsible for ensuring that this confidential information is not removed from the network by any unauthorized user.

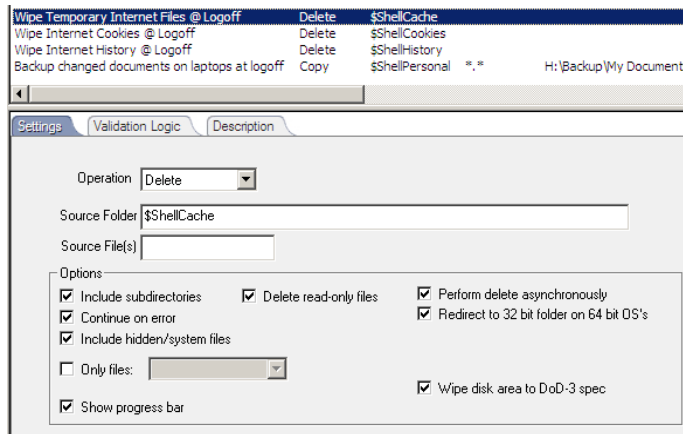
Unwanted removal of sensitive data is a huge security issue. And because the use of removable media devices has become one of the most widely used methods of storing data, certain measures need to be implemented to prevent this type of breach. Educational organizations need a system in place to prohibit or monitor the use of these devices. Copying data, introducing viruses, and installing illegal software on the school network are all issues that must be addressed, and Desktop Authority USB & Port Security tackles these issues head-on. With granular control over each device type, use of certain devices is limited to “read” but not “write” or allow users to “read” CDs or DVDs, but not “burn” them.

Example 4: Desktop Authority provides policy-based lockdown of USB, storage and communication devices with multiple levels of security to allow complete access or denial to certain device types.

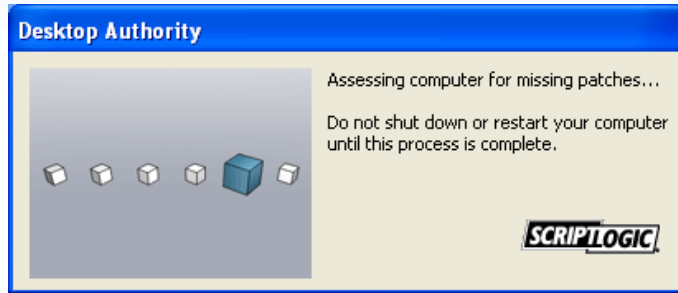


This granular control also allows you to set file permissions, clean out temporary folders on logoff, use Security Policies and keep desktops patched, as shown in the examples below.

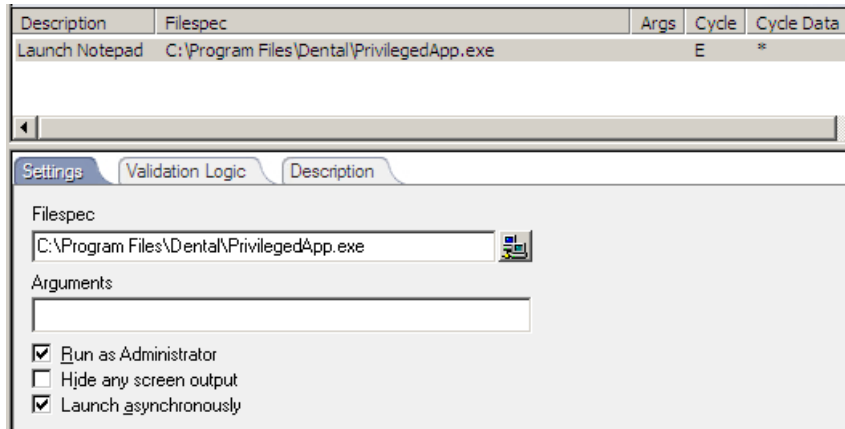
Example 5: Cleaning up temporary folders is just one part of desktop security made easy with Desktop Authority.



Example 6: Prevent opening security holes for your web based applications by securely wiping browser information, including temporary files, history and browser cookies, when the user logs off.



Example 7: Scan your users' desktops for missing patches.



Assist Users With Advanced Individual Support Capabilities

The Remote Management function in Desktop Authority provides best-of-breed remote assistance capabilities for individual user support.

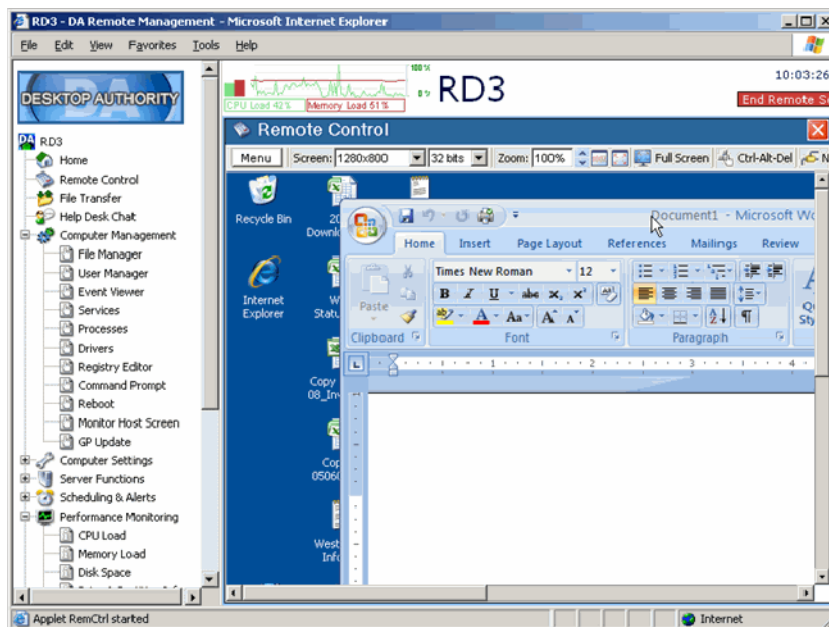
Many situations can be diagnosed and fixed without disturbing the user at all. For example, runaway processes taking 100% of CPU cycles, or services that have stopped. The administrator can explore the file system, registry and applications that have been installed, and transfer files to and from the desktop. They can run a remote command prompt to run instructions directly on the remote desktop, and then review performance statistics and health analysis. If the need to interact with the user arises, a chat function is available, or they can monitor the user's screen. And if necessary, they can take over the remote desktop completely and even blank the remote user's display if they need to perform privileged tasks.

In one recent case, Lane Virgin, Systems Administrator for Bonneville Joint School District explains how Desktop Authority has helped Bonneville address their manpower concerns by

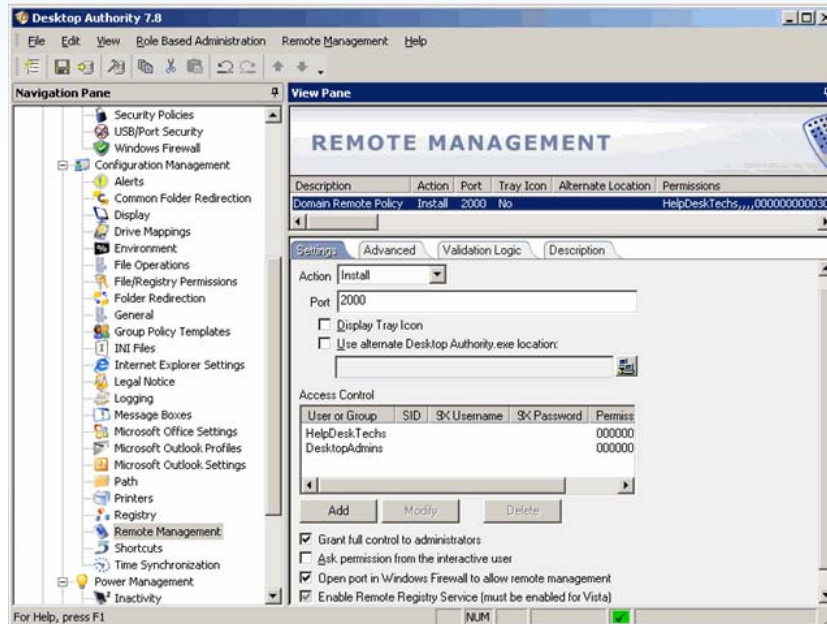
providing best-in-breed remote assistance capabilities. “Our school system is spread out over 15 miles, and it is really nice to sit down at your desk and fix a printer for a user, rather than driving from location to location,” Lane explained, “Not a day goes by that I don’t have a technician who is calling me and asking if I can ‘remote in’ and look at something on a user’s desktops. The remote assistance feature is by far the biggest asset that we use on a daily basis.”

Multiple levels of administrator privilege are provided so that only approved administrators can carry out privileged operations like shadowing a desktop, or deleting files, and the user’s permission is usually required before the support staff see the contents of their screen.

Example 8: Remote assistance capabilities go far beyond traditional remote control and gives administrators complete authority over the remote desktop, including background access to the file system, services, programs and system status without interrupting the end user.



Example 9: Desktop Authority gives the administrator complete control over how the remote management agent is deployed to desktops, including configuration of role-based privileges for junior administrators.

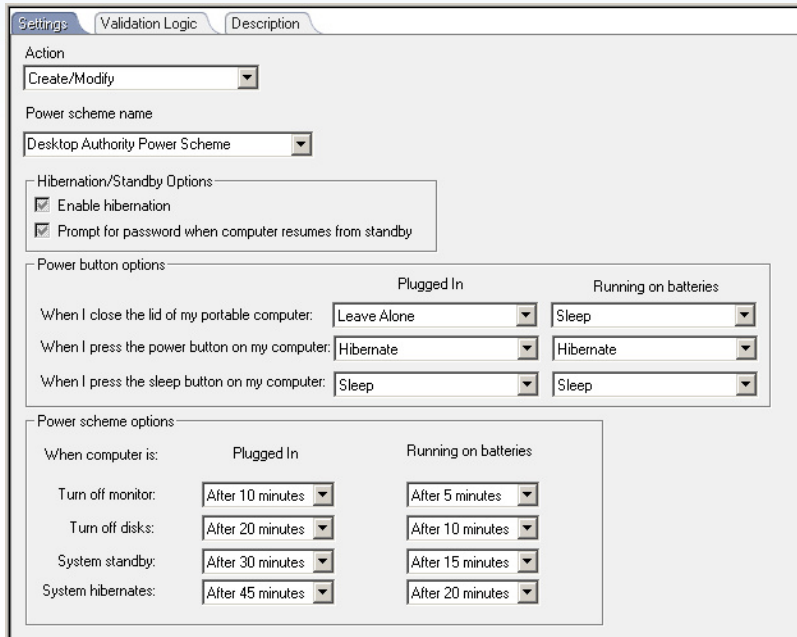


Power Management

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 58% of the time, machines are left inactive throughout the business day and only 38% are actually turned off after hours. And most educational organizations simply do not implement power management because they do not have the granular ability to manage the number of desktops that students and faculty have access to in computer labs or the classrooms. Desktop Authority's power saving settings help alleviate this wasted energy and give more comprehensive control. The Power Management element allows administrators to easily create, modify, or remove Windows power schemes, and provides power saving options such as Standby/Hibernate and turning off monitors and disks. This setting makes it possible for organizations to ensure participation in power saving programs across the organization and in turn, save energy and money.

Lane from Bonneville also benefited from the Power Management capabilities in Desktop Authority, "One of the most significant features to us and to the school board was the Power Management and Inactivity Timer. We did a cost analysis for the board, and using the Power Management scheme ALONE has saved our organization about \$36,000 a year!"

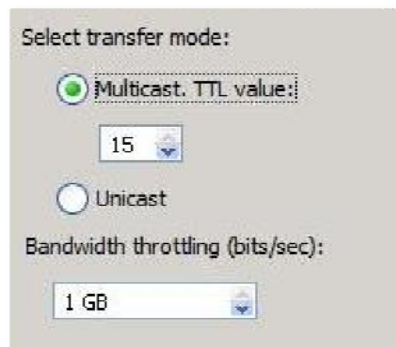
Example 10: Centralized management of power savings policies provides complete control over desktop behavior. Different policies can be targeted at different desktops and groups of users based on their needs and work patterns.



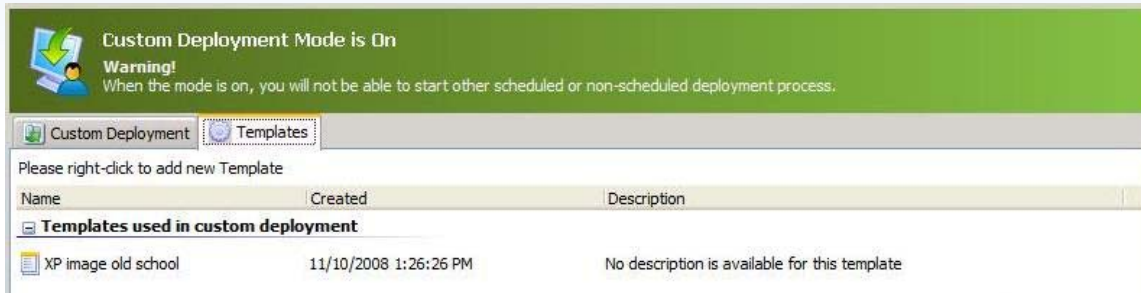
Rapidly Image Lab Computers to Conform to Educational Requirements

Desktop Authority Image Center reduces the cost and time required to provision desktops and servers by centralizing the capture, customization and deployment of disk images. This solution allows IT personnel to quickly image multiple computers in the case of a computer lab setting or classroom, even in labs with multiple types of hardware; the Universal Deploy feature can automatically customize one image for any hardware configuration. Multicast imaging can broadcast images to multiple computers simultaneously. These features make it very easy to rapidly image/re-image a lab depending on the software needed for the course requirements or student needs.

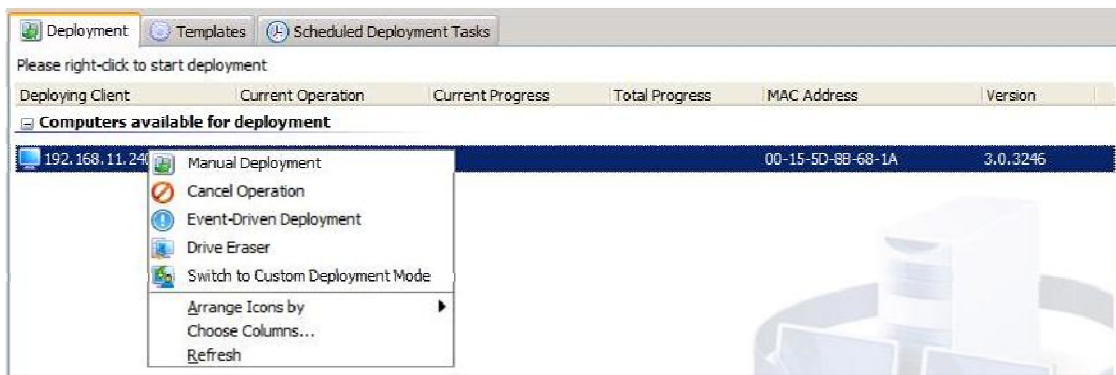
Example 11: The bandwidth control capabilities have been upgraded in version 3.0 to place less strain on the network during image deployment operations.



Example 12: Custom Deployment Mode provides a restricted list of templates from which users can select when their desktops are booted in the imaging environment. This is suitable for classroom or laboratory environments, or where junior administrators are re-imaging computers.



Example 13: Disks on computers which are booted into the Desktop Authority Image Center Agent can now be remotely erased directly from the management console.



Other Functionality in Desktop Authority

The Desktop Authority family of products reduces the cost of managing the Windows desktop and eases the administrator's burden in supporting the desktop lifecycle by enabling administrators to proactively control, inventory, secure, and support desktops from a central location. This solution provides enterprises the granular control they need over Windows desktops and applications to increase IT efficiency, meet compliance requirements, and enhance security. Reduce the total cost of ownership for desktops by reducing help desk calls, managing power more efficiently, restricting the use of removable storage, and keeping your desktops patched and secured.

Desktop Authority provides the administrator with a complete set of desktop configuration features for all Windows clients including Vista. These include:

- Application Installs and Updates
- Patch Management
- Anti-Spyware
- Lockdown USB and other ports
- Windows Firewall (XP SP2+ and Vista)
- Power Management

- Connections to File Servers
- Add and Remove Printers
- Manage Shortcuts
- Manage Outlook Profiles

Key Benefits of Desktop Authority



Be Efficient: Implement a desktop management solution that is simple to install and does not require the purchase of additional consulting services.



Stay Secure : Lock unattended workstations. Control and audit activity on external drives and avoid having student, faculty and staff information, passwords, and other important records removed from your network.



Increase ROI: Lower energy costs by implementing power management option such as standby/hibernate and turning off monitors and disks.



Gain Control: Customize desktops and applications based on date, time, location, OS version and more.

Conclusion

Though the education sector faces many of the same challenges in desktop management as the commercial world, there are clear differentiators. Having minimal IT staff compared to a high number of students and faculty coupled with the constant demand to stay on top of new technological advances all while adhering to a strict budget make managing hundreds to thousands of desktops a daunting task. ScriptLogic’s Desktop Authority provides the tools administrators need to turn desktop administration into a more manageable task, and avoid significant drain on resources. With a solution that is low in complexity yet high in value, this solution provides HED/K-12 organizations the granular control they need of all Windows desktops and applications helping them to increase efficiency, reduce cost, meet internal requirements, and enhance overall security.

About ScriptLogic

ScriptLogic Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Quest Software (Nasdaq: QSFT), is a recognized leader in Microsoft Windows systems and security management. Empowering more than 25,000 customers worldwide with the ability to manage the desktop lifecycle, streamline Active Directory management, secure and protect Windows servers, and ease the burden for help desk administrators, ScriptLogic’s award winning solution families can benefit small to enterprise-size organizations in any industry without the need for intensive learning or product training—our solutions are as easy as “Point, Click, Done!” ScriptLogic, headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida and can be reached at (561) 886-2400 or on the Web at <http://www.scriptlogic.com>.