

Success Story



The George Washington University

To bring greater efficiency and added capabilities to its IT infrastructure, The George Washington University (GW) takes advantage of many Novell® solutions. It leverages Novell GroupWise® to foster collaboration, Novell Open Enterprise Server to reduce support and storage costs, Novell Cluster Services™ to ensure high availability and Novell ZENworks® to improve workstation stability.

Overview

Located four blocks from the White House, The George Washington University (GW) was created by an Act of Congress in 1821. Today, GW is the largest institution of higher education in the nation's capital. The university offers comprehensive programs of undergraduate and graduate liberal arts study as well as degree programs in medicine, public health, law, engineering, education, business and international affairs. Each year, GW enrolls a diverse population of undergraduate, graduate and professional students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and more than 130 countries.

Challenge

The IT team at GW set out to improve the university's collaboration capabilities while strengthening security and reliability. "Our goal is to provide a sustainable, highly efficient IT infrastructure to support the needs of faculty, staff and students," said Raoul Gabiam, IT operations and engineering manager for The George Washington University.

One key area in need of improvement was the university's e-mail system. "Users had

access to the university's funded e-mail system, but it didn't offer integrated calendaring and was limited in terms of information sharing," said Gabiam. "Our users are always on the run, and want access to their calendar and other information from their mobile devices."

GW was also determined to bring greater stability to its IT environment. Occasional hardware failures or application crashes were disrupting business and the university's workstations weren't managed in a consistent manner. "We needed to lock down workstations to prevent unauthorized downloads," said Eric Davis, senior information systems coordinator for The George Washington University. "Rogue computers are more vulnerable to worms, viruses and other issues."

At the same time, the university was looking to gain efficiency and lower costs. "Managing user requests for desktop troubleshooting, printer installation and other tasks was time-consuming and expensive," said Gabiam. "We were also struggling with storage consumption and its associated costs."

George Washington University at a glance:

Private, co-educational university located in Washington, D.C.

■ Industry:

Education

■ Location:

United States

■ Products and Services:

Novell GroupWise

Novell Open Enterprise Server

Novell Cluster Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

Novell ZENworks

■ Results:

- Improved system reliability and uptime
- Avoided nearly US\$100,000 in hardware costs by leveraging existing servers
- Gained ability to cut storage costs by 50 percent
- Reduced workstation imaging time by more than 75 percent
- Slashes troubleshooting time

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Raoul Gabiam

*IT Operations and Engineering Manager
The George Washington University*



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The George Washington University*

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Solution

“Many of our departments manage their own calendars, so it can be a challenge to keep up with what’s going on,” said Gabiam. “With Novell GroupWise and BlackBerry* Enterprise Server, users’ e-mail and calendar appointments are automatically synchronized with their Blackberry devices, significantly increasing their productivity while they’re on-the-go.”

The university makes extensive use of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, and is considering moving additional environments to the platform to further reduce operating costs. In addition, GW leverages several components of Novell Open Enterprise Server, including iPrint, to further increase efficiencies. “It used to take us 20 minutes just to install a print driver, not to mention the travel time involved,” said Davis. “Novell iPrint saves us several hours a day. We are also in the process of deploying Dynamic Storage Technology to identify infrequently accessed data and have it automatically offloaded to less expensive storage devices.”

The university deployed Novell Cluster Services to ensure high availability and extend the lifecycle of its existing hardware. “We have several servers that are out of warranty, potentially putting us at risk if a piece of hardware failed,” said Gabiam. “With Novell Cluster Services, we can continue to leverage hardware we purchased more than six years ago.”

GW also relies on Novell ZENworks to manage more than 3,000 Windows-based workstations across its two campuses. The university uses the Novell solution for application distribution, workstation imaging, patch management and remote control.

Results

Novell GroupWise has brought greater efficiency to GW. “The collaboration and mobility features of Novell GroupWise are very popular with our users,” said Gabiam. “Having two main campuses 30 miles apart, our users aren’t always in the same location and have become dependent on the GroupWise Instant Messenger client. It’s now part of our day-to-day operations.”

By leveraging Novell Cluster Services, the university has improved reliability. “In the past, if a server failed in the middle of the night, we had to have someone on call to address it immediately,” said Gabiam. “Using Novell Cluster Services, we’ve eliminated unplanned service downtime due to hardware failures.”

Novell software has already proven helpful for driving down IT costs. “Without Novell Cluster Services, we would have had to replace our out-of-warranty servers, which would cost well over \$100,000,” said Gabiam. “We also anticipate cutting our storage costs in half by using Novell Dynamic Storage Technology.”

With Novell ZENworks in place, GW has gained a more stable workstation environment. “It’s hard to imagine working without Novell ZENworks,” said Davis. “We can deliver applications in a swift, standardized manner and with standardized desktops, troubleshooting has become much easier. We’ve also gained better control over patches and can quickly ascertain which computers are vulnerable and in need of updates.”



Contact your local Novell Solutions Provider, or call Novell at:

1 800 714 3400 U.S./Canada
1 801 861 1349 Worldwide
1 801 861 8473 Facsimile

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Novell, Inc.

404 Wyman Street
Waltham, MA 02451 USA

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