

MILLARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Omaha School District leverages IGEL's revolutionary micro client to provide students with secure access to graphics intensive CAD applications



The mission of the Millard Public Schools is to guarantee that each student develops the character traits and masters the knowledge and skills necessary for personal excellence and responsible citizenship by developing a world-class educational system with diverse programs and effective practices designed to engage and challenge all students.



FEATURE QUOTE

“ It didn't take us long to realize that the IGEL UD Pocket was exactly what we had been looking for to provide our CAD students with secure access to their graphics-intensive design applications.”

~ Don Shirley, Network Specialist, Millard Public Schools

SUMMARY

The Customer

Millard Public Schools is a K-12 school district located in Omaha, Nebraska

The Challenge

The school district was looking for a secure and cost-effective way to deliver graphics intensive CAD applications to students via Citrix virtual desktops.

The Solution

- IGEL UD Pocket (UDP)

Key Benefits

- Ease of management and configuration
- Time and cost savings
- Robust multimedia experience
- Security

One of the ways that Millard Public Schools is fulfilling its mission is by leveraging innovative technology solutions within the classroom setting to help its students prepare for the future. An example of this is the recent deployment of the IGEL UD Pocket, a revolutionary micro client, inside the district's computer-aided design (CAD) classrooms.

IGEL Gets High Marks for Management, Performance and Cost Savings

Millard Public Schools was first introduced to IGEL through its solution provider partner, Choice Solutions, an IGEL Platinum level partner. "Our team knew that the school district had been looking for a solution that would cost-effectively deliver Autodesk software to their CAD students via a Citrix virtual desktop and we were confident that IGEL could meet their needs and requirements through its broad portfolio of innovative endpoint management solutions," said Jim Steinlage, President & CEO, Choice Solutions.

Don Shirley, Network Specialist, Millard Public Schools, said, "We looked at several IGEL endpoint solutions before learning about the IGEL UD Pocket at a local meeting of the Citrix User Group, and it didn't take us long to realize that this was the exact solution we needed for our CAD classrooms."

Before making a final decision, Millard Public Schools tested the IGEL UD Pocket alongside thin clients from leading manufacturers as well as Chromebooks. "Nothing else came close to the IGEL UD Pocket in terms of ease of management and performance," continued Shirley. "And, because the micro thin client turns any 64-bit, x86-compatible PC into an IGEL OS-powered endpoint, we knew that re-purposing and extending the life of our existing endpoint hardware would also significantly reduce our CAPEX."

Shirley added, "By investing in the IGEL UD Pocket, we were also eliminating what had been a major point of failure with our existing hardware - spinning hard drives. With the IGEL UD Pocket, the virtual machines also boot up much more quickly - 30 seconds or less, compared to the 90 seconds it was taking to boot a traditional desktop. And, because the micro thin clients leverage hardware on the backend, rather than installing costly graphics cards on each individual system, we were able to integrate NVIDIA M10 GPUs on the back-end to support a more robust and graphics-intensive experience for all of our CAD students leveraging IGEL-powered endpoints in the classroom."

IGEL UD Pocket Aces the Security Test

To promote a secure endpoint computing experience, when the IGEL UD Pocket is plugged into the host machine, Millard Public Schools CAD students are only able to access the Windows-based GPU-enabled virtual desktop from a secured Linux-based endpoint. This prevents them from downloading software to the machine or tampering with the OS. "This alone has virtually eliminated any security threats posed by ransomware and other cyber threats, and is helping us keep the machines in our CAD classrooms free of malware and viruses," said Shirley.

To further enhance the security of the solution, the school district took things one-step further, creating a custom enclosure that hides the IGEL UD Pocket from view to prevent students from removing it from the host machine. "Theft was a concern for us, and even though students can only access their desktops from the host devices while on our network, we were worried that the size of the micro client would make it an easy target," continued Shirley. "Hiding the device inside the computer had proven to be a very effective form of loss prevention for us."

Future Plans Include Graduating IGEL UD Pocket from the Classroom to the Front Office

Millard Public Schools began deploying the IGEL UD Pocket in its CAD classrooms during the Spring semester of the 2016-2017 school year. "We started with 30 machines, and now have the IGEL UD Pocket installed on 210 machines across seven CAD classrooms," said Shirley.

“Our future plans include expanding the deployment into the front office, starting with our secretaries, where we hope to experience additional CAPEX savings by extending the life of their desktop computers.”

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