

Cutting edge technology facility chooses *net-runna Enterprise*



iCentrum

iCentrum is an independent group which exists to help SME ICT companies in the West Midlands grow. It makes personal introductions to other SMEs, large IT companies, education establishments and research institutes for the benefit of all. In fact, iCentrum is the chosen 'filter' for some large IT companies when they are looking for SME partners. iCentrum also supports SME's by providing access to specially designed facilities including a Solution Development Laboratory and Demonstration Suite (SDDL).

ICT companies can use iCentrum's SDDL to test, develop and evaluate products in a clean environment. Companies can assess the viability of products by selecting various configurations using a range of hardware platforms and software solutions to help reduce the development times for their products and improve their profitability. To ensure the widest possible use of the facility iCentrum have 'Virtualised' the lab through an IP/KVM. This enables anyone anywhere to access the laboratory providing they have enough bandwidth to cover their requirement. Some of the equipment is also available for hire.

What was the issue?

Imaging is used within the SDDL environment to allow for the speedy deployment and re-deployment of pre-configured Operating Systems and applications. The main problem was that the imaging software in use required a large overhead for storage. The imaging software did not support all Operating Systems in use at iCentrum and the performance of the product would sometimes cause stability and consistency issues. A secondary issue for iCentrum was for the ability to rapidly re-deploy infrastructure and applications to cope with the increasing demands from new companies working with iCentrum.

What solutions were available?

Having considerable experience of imaging and deployment utilities iCentrum's thoughts were to look at some of the major vendors including *Symantec*, *Acronis* and *Altiris*. iCentrum found that these toolsets were too cumbersome and did not offer the flexibility required.

Why *net-runna*?

net-runna Enterprise from *Advanced Network Technologies*, offered the most cost-effective solution whilst meeting the exacting requirements needed from an imaging and deployment solution namely:

- Zero touch client deployment (no agents required)
- Hardware auditing
- Full PXE support
- Reduced image storage requirements
- Uni-cast and multi-cast deployment
- Major file system support i.e. NTFS, FAT16, FAT32, HPFS, EXT2/3 etc

The benefits of *net-runna Enterprise* included:

- Single instance storage on the *net-runna Enterprise* server massively reduced the storage requirements for images
- PXE shell
- Client push and pull capabilities
- Granular security
- Client Operating System independent

What has been the result?

net-runna Enterprise forms part of iCentrum's core service offering of "Lab Virtualisation". This service offers rapid deployment of Operating Systems and applications within a virtual environment accessed using KVM/IP and RDP technologies. Another benefit has been the reduction of storage required to image the applications and Operating Systems from >20 Terabytes to <5 Terabytes. Deployment and imaging using *net-runna* has reduced the time taken to setup new configurations allowing iCentrum to provide a better service to the ICT companies in the West Midlands.

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