

SUCCESS STORY



BY THE NUMBERS

60,000 students in the top 100 largest districts of US

9,000 employees

100 campuses across 250 square miles

3,358 devices monitored client since 2008

What El Paso ISD is doing with Zenoss:

- Saving time & getting more efficient
- Providing better support to remote facilities
- Analyzing network usage to plan better for future capacity needs
- Hitting departmental goals better than before
- Making their jobs easier
- Becoming more productive and effective overall

“If we didn’t have Zenoss, we couldn’t keep our network up and running.”

– **Stephen Crye**, Network Infrastructure Manager, El Paso Independent School District

Steve Crye describes himself as the “Network Plumber” of the El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) – one of the top 100 largest districts in the U.S. His team of 6 keeps 60,000 students and 9,000 staff plugged into the Information Age, across a sprawling network of 100 campuses, distributed over 250 square miles. Students, teachers, parents, and administrators expect always-on access at world-class speed, and Steve’s team knows they’ll hear about it otherwise – as they manage the trouble-ticket queue. They also bring up as many as 2 new school campuses each year and manage other large projects. And across everything, Steve serves as point man for network security in a system that includes tens of thousands of IT-savvy students, including a significant number who attempt to circumvent the District’s security measures.

Before Zenoss: The Challenge

- Team was frustrated with lack of the “big picture” with previous monitoring software
- They would get emails “over and over and over again” about any issue
- Had to run reports to get anything actionable
- Steve had to escalate issues to sales staff of previous vendor in order to get adequate (but grumpy) tech support

Choosing the Zenoss Solution

- Steve saw a Zenoss review in InfoWorld in 2008
- He saw the “big view” his team needed – “it was simple and elegant”
- His team loved that one event would equal precisely one alert, which could be assigned to one person to clear

After: The Impact

- Steve’s team now has simplified alerting & monitoring
- They can pull usage data for capacity planning purposes, so requisitions have data behind them
- Though they can “watch the big board” if they want, they can focus on other big projects until Zenoss texts an alert notification that manual intervention is needed
- “We’re running at **one-tenth** the staffing ratio of comparable school districts.”

“Our network’s never failed in the years I’ve been here,” says Steve – who says this takes perseverance, a willingness to keep abreast of industry news (he spends about 5 hours per week reading IT journals and comparing notes with peers), and the right tools. “But if we didn’t have Zenoss, we couldn’t keep our network up and running.” Steve is NOT a fan of the term “cloud computing” and uses very little off-site virtual infrastructure; though he does embrace local virtualized servers where it makes sense. With a small staff and stringent content filtering criteria, EPISD maintain a simple hub-and-spoke network topology with a static setup. “We only need to update routing tables twice a year, and I’ve seen how a supposed ‘self-healing network’ can become a ‘self-breaking network,’ too.” Without redundancy built-in, a member of Steve’s team jumps on problems right away – for instance driving 40 miles round-trip when a facility suddenly loses city power and a remote network component there doesn’t power back up in a stable state. “We find we have far fewer problems this way.” And when unexpected issues do arise? “Zenoss has the best tech support in the universe.”

About Zenoss

Zenoss is a leading provider of management software for physical, virtual, and cloud-based IT infrastructures. Over 35,000 organizations worldwide have deployed Zenoss to manage their networks, servers, virtual devices, storage, and cloud infrastructure, gaining complete visibility and predictability into their IT operations. Customers include Rackspace, VMware, Hosting.com, LinkedIn, Motorola and SunGard.

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