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Jeff DeIMastro
Technology Coorindator

Canton Public Schools Replaces Three Programs with SyAM

Canton (Connecticut) Public Schools has 1,850 students. The high school has around 450 students, the middle school has 280, the intermediate school has 350, and the elementary school has the rest.

The Canton school district tracks 1787 assets of which 1,251 are Chromebooks, 163 Laptops, 234 are desktops and 139 are iPads. They have been operational with SyAM since July 2017.

Why was SyAM brought in to Canton

Prior to bringing in SyAM, the Canton school district used three different products to handle power management, patch management and ticket management. Jeff DeIMastro, Technology Director of Canton Public Schools, said, “We had a power management program that caused a serious insomnia state on some of our computers. They would go to sleep and would not wake up. We had to power them off and reboot, and that was causing a lot of time consuming problems.”

For patch management, the district was doing a lot of manual installations for one-off applications causing an excessive amount of repeat work.

“And we were not happy with our web-based ticketing system,” said Jeff, “We were actively seeking another ticketing system.”

“I am very environmentally conscious, so I wanted to see a ‘green impact’ from reducing power consumption in our district. That was very important to me personally. We have a very busy office with only three people that support the entire fleet of 1787 units and the 2100 staff and students, so we needed something that was going to be up and running fast and with no disruptions. We needed it to be effective and customized for our environment.”

Michael Mazzariello from SyAM, made a call to Jeff at just the right time. “I told Mike that I was not happy with our current solutions,” said Jeff, “and he came up with a really equitable, cost effective solution.

“I decided to go with SyAM because it handled our three needs and also addressed application deployment, which traditionally has been a very difficult challenge for Canton Schools. Being able to deploy things like Adobe, Flash Player, and Java can be challenging. Most things that have MSI packages can be pushed out via Active Directory, but other unique applications are problematic. SyAM was able to handle that really well for us.”

“So we save power, we manage our iPads, and we have a much improved ticket solution.”

How SyAM is used at Canton

“We use SyAM for managing our iPad fleet,” said Jeff. “We are now able to deploy apps and manage everything we need to do at that level which before was a time consuming effort for us.

“We also use SyAM to do ticket management, where work requests come in through a workflow portal that we routinely check. This has reduced downtime.

“And probably the most important application is power management. SyAM is deployed so that it shuts off computers based on usage and time schedules. I can turn power off at a certain period of time and boot them up during another period of time.”

“So we save power, we manage our iPads, and we have a much improved ticket solution.

SyAM produces Results

The implementation of SyAM’s Power Manager and the removal of the other products resulted in a net savings of around \$8,500 annually.

Jeff elaborated, “We were partially subsidized by our power company because there is a significant power savings built into the SyAM product. The rest was purchased and paid for by the school district. It really turned out to be a very effective solution for us both in cost and productivity.

“We were looking to slice our annual subscription fees, so when I came back with, ‘I have a solution that gives us better management systems and saves us \$8,500,’ it turned some heads.”

Working with SyAM

Jeff also gives high grades to the SyAM people.

“Many times a salesman will come in with a product that looks good and they make the sale, and when they walk away it's like pulling teeth to make things happen. That's not the case with Nick (Nick Thickins, President of SyAM). Mike and Nick are my implementation team. We had an extensive amount of work to do in the cutover of the iPads and Nick and Mike just did it for us. They're phenomenal.

“SyAM has been incredibly responsive in customizing things that are specific to our environment. Every time we call, they are 100% responsive. I asked for a custom report that SyAM did not have out of the box and Nick pulled the data from behind the scenes and sent it to me within a couple hours. That was mind-blowingly great.

“The SyAM support team is also very responsive. If there's a specific program that we want installed our technicians or server administrators will call the SyAM support team who will look at the product and say, 'Here's how to code that to make the install happen.' And they will always do that within a couple hour turnaround.”

Why SyAM is a success at Canton

“SyAM has been a success for us in that the product works as intended,” said Jeff. “We now have a single database for managing all assets. As a result we are seeing significant savings over time. We've had very few glitches and it's installed on almost every asset in our district. So that's a huge success.

“SyAM is also a success because of the people behind the scenes. Their support team, with their dedication, is what's drives our success, and that has huge value. When we call SyAM and say, 'This is what's occurring. How do we handle this?' they have an answer quickly and effectively.

“There has been little to no impact on our operations, which is a good thing. We went from a very simple, point and click interface for our ticketing solution to another point and click interface and people were able to navigate and get up and running quickly. There were no problems during implementation.

“There certainly has been an increase in our ability to support and deploy software packages. We're seeing that customized pieces of software get out there much more quickly. SyAM has made our office and our staff much more effective and productive.

“I would definitely recommend SyAM; not only because of the cost savings, which are significant, but also its environmental impact savings, and how hands-on and simple SyAM has made it for us during the installation process.

Jeff concludes, “The selling point for me is how incredible the support staff is at SyAM. That is worth everything.”

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