



**Software2™**

## University of Surrey case study: Improving the student IT experience with virtualised application delivery

*The University of Surrey has a central IT department working in partnership with four faculties. In order to keep up to date with the dynamic technology market and to continue providing cutting edge systems to staff and students, the IT team saw an opportunity to improve its current software delivery and distribution process.*

### Challenges

- Speeding up the delivery of services and enhancing the student experience
- Improving the current software delivery and distribution process
- Effectively managing 100's of applications across 1000's of machines

### Solution

- Application Jukebox™ from Software2
- Software2 consulting team

### Benefits

- Improved student experience - any Windows™ application to any managed machine
- Enhanced student experience; software applications can be found in a consistent way across all of the computer rooms
- Faster software installation and more reliable PCs during exams periods
- Phase 2 to include a self-service portal to deploy applications to students' personal machines

### Why Software2?

- Application deployment specialists
- Education focused - so understood the issues and challenges
- Industry specific user days and online user community
- Personal, customer focused service

UNIVERSITY OF  
SURREY

## BACKGROUND

The University of Surrey is one of the UK's leading professional, scientific and technological universities with a world class research profile and a reputation for excellence in teaching and research. In addition to the campus on 150 hectares just outside Guildford, in Surrey, the university also owns and runs the Surrey Research Park. The university is one of the region's largest employers with over 2,500 staff and 17,900 students living and working on and around campus.



The Sunday Times names Surrey as 'The University for Jobs' which underlines the university's growing reputation for providing high-quality, relevant degrees.

Surrey is a member of the 1994 Group of 19 leading research-intensive universities. The Group was established in 1994 to promote excellence in university research and teaching. Each member undertakes diverse and high-quality research, whilst ensuring excellent levels of teaching and student experience.

## CHALLENGE



The university IT team needs to ensure the provision of fit-for-purpose systems on a secure and reliable infrastructure whilst delivering efficient and cost-effective solutions for staff and students.

In the past, the central IT team and the four faculties operated in a more independent way. Staff and students from each faculty used specific applications on top of the standard business packages and every IT faculty team was responsible for maintaining its own student computer rooms; upgrading, installing, uninstalling and testing software applications as required.

As software started to become increasingly complex, the maintenance overheads increased, leading to reduced efficiency in spite of the stringent PC replacement process that the university follows every 3 to 4 years. Overall, the IT support staff spent a large amount of time manually installing software applications and resolving difficulties that arose when integrating new applications on the computers.

As soon as the central and four faculties IT teams started working together, it was recognised that a tool to manage the university's software catalogue was needed in order to maximise the use of resources, to speed up the delivery of services and to enhance the student experience.

## SOLUTION

The search for a software management solution that would work across the university computers was on. James Pickett, Senior Desktop Analyst explains: "When we were looking at what we could do across the faculties and central IT's application delivery, we could see the big win was clearly software management. Many people on the IT team were unhappy with the current software platform and processes, so it seemed the way forward".

*"...it became apparent that only around 80% of software could be moved... It was at this point that the project team discovered Application Jukebox™..."*

After seeking advice on the subject from other universities and consultancies, it was decided that software virtualisation was the route to take. The project team investigated the best-known, market-leading products. Upon closer investigation it became apparent that only around 80% of the software could be moved onto these products as they could not support certain complex applications. It was at this point that the project team discovered Application Jukebox™ which claimed to be able to go that vital step further than the market leaders and deliver almost 100% of the software. Following vendor presentations, the university IT team carried out a proof-of-concept trial between one of the market-leading products and Application Jukebox™.



It was a competitive trial period but Application Jukebox™, provided by Software2, emerged as the winner. The benefits Application Jukebox™ offers will enable the university IT team to streamline their software management process. System Analyst, Dy Gunasekara says: “With Application Jukebox™ we are all using the same product, at the same level, so it has really helped to improve our software delivery and distribution process across the university”. A major advantage of Application Jukebox™ over other products is that it reduces the duplication of efforts across the university IT team in terms of software building, installation and maintenance.

The main overall benefits of using Application Jukebox™ now experienced by the University of Surrey are:

- Faster software installation and more reliable PCs during exams periods. Dy Gunasekara says: “Rebuild times after exams were taking at least two hours, for some computer rooms across faculties it was taking from 4-6 hours per PC in addition to some overnight builds that ran for hours”. James Pickett adds: “It is mainly down to the operating system and the PC’s core software. Now, during exam periods, we can convert a student computer room in much less time than before and the build is reliable”.
- Improved software licence purchasing decision process. By using Application Jukebox’s reporting tool, it is possible to see what software application has been used by each faculty and/or department.
- Enhanced student experience; software applications can be found in a consistent way across the university computer rooms.
- Smooth running PCs as software packages do not have to be installed onto them individually. James Pickett explains: “Software is now deployed in our student computer rooms on-demand which means that PCs are now running quite lean, compared to the 60-80 applications that were sitting on them before”.

*“ In the near future, to improve the student experience and to take full advantage of Application Jukebox’s capabilities, the university IT team plans to implement a self-service portal where it will be easier for students to access the software they need on their own PCs. ”*



Phil Vacher, Collaboration, Desktop & Storage Systems team leader concludes: “We found working with Software2 extremely helpful as they listened to us. We found particularly useful the Application Jukebox™ user days and the online user community; it is encouraging to know that some of the change requests from previous community days are going to be part of the next release. In general, a good experience to work with them and at the end of the day, it just works well”.



## ABOUT SOFTWARE2

Software2 specialise in innovative solutions for software distribution and delivery within the education sector.

By bringing Application Jukebox™ to the UK education sector, Software2 has successfully enabled many universities to realise their software deployment strategies efficiently and cost-effectively.

At Software2, we strive to provide customer service levels that are unparalleled. We work hard to make sure we provide our customers with the maximum support from day one, and with our support team you can guarantee that you will get a personal one-to-one service with any of your queries.

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