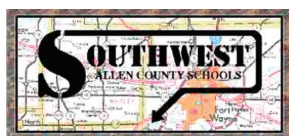


Deliver, Deploy, and Test More Than 2,100 Notebooks and Desktops—and Provide Important Asset Management Capabilities



HP and Matrix Integration deliver for an Indiana school district—despite schedule and specification changes that resulted in extremely tight timelines.



The challenge: Indiana's Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) is a school district that includes six elementary, one middle, and two high schools—and serves more than 6,800 students. In late 2007, SACS decided it was time to replace the computers used by elementary students and teachers throughout the district. In the end, that decision would require the district to purchase and deploy more than 2,100 notebook and desktop systems.

SACS had to meet this challenge on an extremely tight schedule. Starting with a call for bids to be submitted on February 8, 2008, the district wanted all the new computers in place and operational by August 1—including imaging, asset tagging, and an inventory logging all the new equipment via the district's asset management software.

Adding to the time crunch, the district recognized that many of its elementary teachers (who had been using Apple computers) were unfamiliar with the Microsoft® Windows® XP operating system. That meant there would need to be a round of district-wide training sessions to bring the teachers up to speed. To make sure their training was wrapped up in time for the start of the 2008–09 school year when the new computers would be in classrooms, 450 notebooks had to be in the teachers' hands within weeks of bid approvals.

Hitting a speed bump

Getting the job done took extraordinarily close cooperation among the key parties involved: Southwest Allen County Schools, HP, and Matrix Integration, an HP Elite partner.

As Donald Chase, director of technology at SACS, explains, "HP connected us with various vendors, including Matrix Integration. From our conversations, I developed some specifications and asked for bids."

HP customer case study: providing outstanding service while meeting tight timelines for delivery, deployment, and asset management of over 2,100 new notebooks and desktops

Industry: education

Objective

Replace all teacher and elementary student computers for an Indiana school district—delivering and deploying each unit to a specific classroom while providing detailed asset tagging to give the district an effective, computer-based asset management method.

Approach

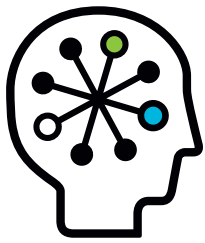
HP Elite Partner Matrix Integration worked closely with the district to deploy the new systems on time—managing all aspects of delivery, deployment, and testing while providing asset tagging for efficient management of fixed assets.

IT improvements

- Upgraded the district's classroom computer systems
- Consolidated all classroom computers on a single platform
- Exceeded district's bid specifications
- Enhanced teachers' computer skills with timely training

Business outcomes

- Asset tagging—with tag numbers put in computer files—permitted efficient management of fixed assets
- Consolidation onto one platform simplified management



“When you look at everything they did, it was Matrix Integration’s service, their ability to provide inventory, asset management and imaging—and installing the computers to our specifications—that was the most important part of the project.” —Donald E. Chase, director of technology, Southwest Allen County Schools

But midway through the process, bidding hit a speed bump. As Chase remembers, “We noticed the returned bids were not consistent. So to make sure we weren’t comparing apples and oranges, we tightened up the specs and decided to ask for a second round of bids.”

That moved the due date for bids back to March 26, 2008, nearly two months after the original bid due date. But it didn’t move the August 1 deadline by even an hour. “So the time requirements were significantly more stringent,” Chase says. “Obviously, those 450 teacher machines were the most important. They needed to be in as soon as possible.”

When HP and Matrix won the second round of bidding, they now had only a few weeks to get the notebooks delivered—and only a few months to deploy the remaining 1,720 systems.

“Even though we weren’t the low bidders,” says Randy Ballinger, public sector account manager for Matrix Integration, “we offered additional advantages and features in each computer—which justified the additional price.”

“In the case of desktop units,” Chase adds, “those advantages included 2GB of RAM vs. 1GB RAM in the bid specifications—and a DVD-RW vs. just a CD-RW drive.”

Making asset management more manageable

“Matrix Integration understands the pressures faced by school systems today,” Ballinger says. “As veterans in the K–12 market, we have access to resources like HP that are needed to provide the best solutions for educational environments—and to provide them on time and on budget.”

After delivering the teacher notebooks in late April and early May, Matrix got busy on the balance of the order: 1,000 notebooks and 720 desktops with monitors. As the process unfolded, Matrix also supervised and coordinated all the asset tagging—placing a label on the outside of each unit and providing Chase with a spreadsheet listing all

the new fixed assets. The spreadsheet included user and computer names, serial numbers, asset tags, PO numbers, type of hardware (notebook or desktop), purchase dates, configuration information, operating systems, and location of each unit—down to the specific classroom.

Ballinger explains that, “Depending on whether it was a notebook, a monitor, or a desktop, there were specific locations where Don requested the tags be placed ... so there was a uniform installation from school to school and from room to room.”

“In addition to physical asset tags,” Chase says, “Matrix put electronic asset tags in each computer so our Novell software would automatically recognize the asset tag and place it into our inventory. When you look at everything they did, it was Matrix Integration’s service, their ability to provide inventory, asset management and imaging—and installing the computers to our specifications—that was the most important part of the project.”

To get all the computer systems installed, functioning, and running according to specifications by the August 1 deadline, Matrix Integration not only made delivery, but also placed each unit in its designated school and its specific classroom. Matrix then unboxed the units and recycled the boxes; connected monitors, mice, and keyboards to desktops and notebooks; and finally, tested network connections for both laptops and desktops.

And what about the August 1 deadline? Despite a nearly two-month delay during the bidding process, Matrix Integration almost made it, coming in late by about an hour and a half.

“The Matrix guys were finishing up in the wee hours of August 2nd,” Chase laughs, “while I was on my way on vacation. I told them working late wasn’t necessary, they could wait until the next week. But they were driven to get the job done on time. And I respect that.”

Technology for better business outcomes

To learn more, visit www.hp.com
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