

# Mehlville School District

The school district uses the customized imaging capabilities of Micro Focus® ZENworks® to make everything easier—from inventorying hardware to generating reports and pushing configurations.

### Overview

Located in Saint Louis, Mehlville School District consists of 1,350 staff and 11,000 students. This school district operates 17 schools across 22 buildings in the Saint Louis area. The Character Education Partnership named the school district a National District of Character in 2014.

### Challenge

With some 12,350 users relying on a variety of applications and devices, the school district's IT staff needed an effective desktop management solution that could deploy applications faster and more reliably than its users could by

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Mehlville School District

using CDs and USB drives. In other words, the district needed an efficient, automated imaging solution.

### Solution

Mehlville School District was already a ZENworks customer when system administrator Mark Fratto started in 2008. But Fratto's initial exposure to Novell (now part of Micro Focus) wasn't positive due to poor experiences with outdated products at a previous job, so rather than learn to optimize the district's existing ZENworks solution, he looked at other products and solutions to replace it—Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) and Active Directory Group Policy Objects, for example.

But after this investigation, Fratto realized that the ZENworks not only fit the district's budget better than its competitors, but also had much more power and versatility for application management and imaging than any other products. This is when he began to recognize the potential benefits of using ZENworks, and his opinions of the solution changed completely. “If you have someone in your department that is innovative and a quick learner, ZENworks can dominate its competition. This is coming from an IT person who hated Novell with his heart and [soul] in the beginning,” said Fratto.



### At a Glance

#### ■ Industry

Education

#### ■ Location

United States

#### ■ Challenge

The district's IT staff needed a desktop management solution that could deploy applications faster than users could with CDs and USB drives.

#### ■ Solution

Use ZENworks to automate manual processes and application deployment.

#### ■ Results

- + Automated customized imaging processes
- + Saved time deploying and managing applications
- + Reduced the workload for IT staff

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The district moved to the latest version of ZENworks, and Fratto, whose preference is to be self-taught, began searching community message boards to learn what ZENworks could do. He soon discovered the power of customizable imaging with ZENworks and began implementing this feature to what he deems an “extreme” extent—surpassing the ZENworks community message board’s ability to help him as he looked to implement new features.

“ZENwork’s application management and imaging has much more power and versatility than any other products I have looked at,” said Fratto. “If software could have a god complex, it would be the ZENworks management console and imaging services.”

### Results

Fratto uses custom imaging to make everything easier, from inventorying hardware and cache speed to generating reports and pushing configurations. “Let’s just say if an issue comes up that can be handled by ZENworks Configuration Management, I go that route,” Fratto said.

By automating processes that were once manual and deploying applications that previously couldn’t automatically deploy, ZENworks has lightened the IT staff’s workload. Among other things, ZENworks now reliably manages 6,500 Windows desktops and laptops.

In the future, Fratto plans on allowing staff members to perform self-service imaging when a serious issue arises, eliminating the need to call IT for help. He also plans to continue to implement additional features, such as asset-tracking updates and new scripting, which will further reduce his field technicians’ workloads.

### About Micro Focus

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#### Micro Focus

##### UK Headquarters

United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 1635 565200

##### U.S. Headquarters

Provo, Utah  
801 861 4272  
888 321 4272

Additional contact information and office locations:  
[www.novell.com](http://www.novell.com)