

CASE STUDY

Redstone Managed Solutions Working in Education

Virtual-Workspace – £11m DfES Pathfinder Project for e-Learning

Redstone is working with Nord Anglia Education to extend the e-learning horizons of 14-19 year olds and teachers with the implementation of the Virtual-Workspace, a £11million DfES pathfinder project.

The Virtual-Workspace is a new, dynamic website providing students with their own private web space and access to over 3,000 interactive digital learning materials. It has been developed by Nord Anglia Education for Worecestershire and Wolverhampton LEAs, in response to the Government's 14-19 strategy to increase achievement through information communication technology (ICT). Since its launch in September 2004, the unique web portal has attracted over 25,000 registered learners in 71 schools. Redstone has been responsible for the design and integration of a fully resilient hosting solution, together with stringent Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to deliver mission critical uptime.

“Redstone’s experience in hosting and ISP services, plus its proven education sector expertise provided the perfect platform from which, by working together, we ensured smooth integration with excellent support.”

***Phill Clegg, Project Manager,
Nord Anglia***

NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION PLC

Phil Clegg, project manager at Nord Anglia said: “The Virtual-Workspace has seen amazing success since its launch and we are delighted with the system. Redstone’s experience in hosting and ISP services, plus its proven education sector expertise provided the perfect platform from which, by working together, we ensured smooth integration with excellent support.”

Ruth Kelly, the then Secretary of State for Education and Skills (2004-2006) said: “The Virtual- Workspace is an exciting initiative that is meeting the challenges of personalised learning. It places the individual learner at the heart of the system, supported and empowered to direct and develop his or her learning and link up with learners with common interests through online learning communities.”

About Redstone Managed Solutions

Redstone Managed Solutions has over 10 years experience of providing IT infrastructure and Internet Solutions

Our solutions and services include:

- IT Solutions, Managed Services and Outsourcing
- Internet Solutions
- Application and Systems Development
- Managed Hosting and Business Continuity Solutions
- Network and Infrastructure Management
- IT and Network Consultancy

Redstone Managed Solutions can manage and support your business networks from enterprise level through to the desktop, with a comprehensive single source service for business. We also provide hosting solutions from our London and Cambridge data centres, with scaleable solutions, from a single server to multiple racks. Internet solutions include managed MPLS networks, managed firewall, email filtering, online data backup, global roaming internet access and all forms of connectivity throughout the UK.

Our dedicated Cambridge Metropolitan Area Network delivers internet and integrated connectivity solutions over a state of the art communications back-bone.

Redstone – Working in Education

Filtering For Safer Content In Coventry

Redstone Managed Solutions has been working with Coventry LEA since 2001, initially providing an ISDN-based email and web service for all the Authority's schools. The service has recently been upgraded to broadband by Redstone to provide a 28Mb educationally filtered ISP connection.

Brian Barber is the IT Client Officer for the Education and Library Service at Coventry LEA. He said: "When we originally joined the National Grid for Learning under the terms of a contract with BT, we suffered a slow and erratic service for about two years. We were then offered the opportunity to move to a specialist education ISP, and we selected Redstone. The service improved dramatically and we have been working with them ever since, including the move to broadband.

"Broadband is delivering a wealth of benefits including access to a richer curriculum for teaching, as well, of course, as the much improved speed."

Redstone is providing Coventry LEA with filtered email and web services, together with anti-virus software. Brian Barber: "Filtering is what really distinguishes a specialist education internet service provider from all the other companies. Our service is being delivered to 45,000 pupils in one hundred and seventeen schools throughout the region. Fast, efficient and reliable filtering is absolutely fundamental to the service."



The Broadband Experience at Dumfries and Galloway

Also moving to broadband is Dumfries and Galloway Council, who have been working with Redstone Managed Solutions for over five years as the Internet Service Provider for all their secondary schools.

The broadband project, which will move the schools to the Scottish Schools Digital Network, InterConnect, is currently being piloted with the plan to roll out it out shortly. John Tait at Dumfries and Galloway commented: "The introduction of broadband will make a huge difference. We will have a 2Mb connection to the central hub, rather than the existing 128 kb ISDN service."

Redstone will be supplying a filtering solution based on SmartFilter running on Cisco's CEs which provides flexibility and scalability not only a managed central filtering solution, but also as a migration path which will enable all sixteen schools in the region to manage their own filtering policies, if required. Web hosting services will continue to be provided by Redstone via their Virtual NGfL product which enables schools to take advantage of specialist educational ISP services whilst using a broadband connection provided by the LEA.

John Tait added: "I believe that it is very important to work with a company that understands the education environment, such as Redstone. This expertise really makes a difference to the type of products and services which they provide. In addition, I have been very pleased with the recent technical support provided by Redstone, which is another key issue for LEAs."



"We have found Redstone to be very customer-focussed and responsive."

Jack Ringland, Contracts Manager, C2K

When Security Is Key

C2K (Classroom 2000) is a major initiative in Northern Ireland which is delivering state of the art technology services to all schools in the region. Delivered as a fully managed service 40,000 networked computers provide schools with a rich mix of educational content, as well as administrative and management functionality.

Redstone Managed Solutions has been working with C2K for a number of years, and the company's WebXchange product is used to provide a secure, easy to use and transparent means of transferring data (primarily examination files) across the Internet. According to Jack Ringland, Contracts Manager at C2K: "WebXchange records the progress of files transferred throughout the system so that checks can be made, in real time, as to whether the file has been delivered or downloaded. At the current time nearly 300 schools use Redstone's WebXchange for the transfer of their twice-yearly examination results. Typically about 15,500 records will be up and downloaded using WebXchange each year."

WebXchange is extremely secure – which is vital for the handling of such sensitive data. It uses 128-bit encryption based on a 1024-bit RSA key, which is the strongest commercially available option.

Jack Ringland at C2K continued: "We are now expanding our use of WebXchange to include the transfer of finance, census and key stage data. The service has also been piloted in a number of primary schools, and once fully tested, this could lead to the roll out of WebXchange to a further nine hundred schools where it would be used for the transfer of census information.

"WebXchange has been designed by Redstone specifically for the transfer of sensitive, time-critical data within the education sector. We have found Redstone to be very customer-focussed and responsive. Quite simply, WebXchange from Redstone provides an exact fit to the requirements of C2K."

