

## IT Asset Management >> Watch Your Assets

By Linda L. Briggs, Campus Technology magazine, May 2005 issue



### Remotely Effective

At **University of the South** (TN), the small liberal arts institution where Wayne Bussell is the system administrator for computer labs and classrooms, an IT asset management suite, NetSupport DNA ([www.netsupport-inc.com](http://www.netsupport-inc.com)), and remote system management provided by NetSupport Manager, are saving the school both time and money. Even better, the savings started almost as soon as the products were installed.

Roughly four years ago, Bussell says, the school was running only Apple Macintosh computers. After a big push to move to PCs, he says, "there was no way I could visit every machine and do the upgrades necessary; I had to find something to automate it."

Using NetSupport, installed in 2003, Bussell is currently managing 85 machines, and really likes the features and control it gives him. For example, the inventory control module can collect a complete software and hardware

inventory from each computer. Bussell says savings were realized almost immediately: "Our return on investment was within a month." The original cost of the entire suite: about \$4,600 for 75 licenses.

After installation, the system works by creating a client installer package that immediately polls every machine on the network, returning asset data such as system name, manufacturer, memory size, serial number, workgroup, processor, network adapter, printers, hard drive size and available space, USB connectors, and much more. The software also can perform tasks like deleting files, or sending executable files for users to run.

The school maintains state-of-the-art IT equipment, Bussell says, and managing assets closely has helped his staffers do that and still save money. For example, he's been able to monitor a specific group of computers from the same manufacturer, to gauge how they are holding up. That, he says, "helps us to evaluate our next purchase." Another module in the suite allows him to monitor Internet use on each computer in the lab, both by tracking Web usage and blocking select URLs. Still another selling point for him, he says, is the ability to distribute files to a specific machine or machines, since instructors often have material on a flash drive or disk that they want distributed. NetSupport Manager and DNA (enterprise systems management software) have that capability.

"Any time you can automate something," Bussell concludes, "you're better off. For us, this solution has met expectations and more."