

University of Nottingham saving £325 every day with Data Synergy PowerMAN and WakeMyPC

“PowerMAN/WakeMyPC is an entirely new software based solution that offers a cost-effective way of working with the existing estate of IT equipment and doesn’t require the end user to have any additional knowledge to be more environmentally friendly.”

“The network at the University of Nottingham is fairly typical of most organisations in the sector, in terms of the equipment used and the multi-site nature of the campus environment. Our developing and testing the solution within this environment reassures other prospective customers that the product will work for them.”

The University of Nottingham (UoN) is a world-class university ranked in the UK top 10, the European top 30 and in the top 1 per cent of all universities worldwide. A member of the Russell group, the university was named Times Higher Education "University of the Year" in 2006, Times Higher Education "Entrepreneurial University of the Year" in 2008, and runner up in the 2010 Sunday Times "University of the Year". With an annual budget in excess of £500m, the university has over 30,000 UK-based students together with further campuses in Malaysia and China.

The Information Services (IS) department manage over 10,000 UK-based desktop computers for both staff and student users. Services range from email and internet access in student study bedrooms, to state-of-the-art learning and studying facilities, software and high performance computing in Schools and Institutes.

Like many progressive organisations, UoN was very aware of the pressures to reduce PC running costs (rising energy prices, new legislation with financial penalties for non-compliance and a social responsibility to protect the environment) as part of its wider Carbon Reduction strategy.

The University purchased Data Synergy’s PowerMAN power management software in 2009. Initially implemented in student facilities the software achieved immediate gains. The metrics that PowerMAN provides identify the worst offending groups of PC’s and measure the savings that are being made.

“PowerMAN monitors a total of 15,382 staff and student computers of which 10,521 are staff computers. Of the total staff computers 94% are being managed with only 6% opting out”

The second phase of the power management project was to introduce energy saving to staff workstations. The university team quickly identified that many users required remote desktop access and this would limit the effectiveness of the power management strategy.

“We needed an effective solution to ensure that our PC power management strategy would get the highest take-up from staff users. We realised that one of the biggest barriers to entry for staff is the need for remote PC access. This highlighted a requirement for a simple and secure way to wake PCs on demand to work alongside our power management solution.”

The university worked with Data Synergy to introduce and trial the WakeMyPC software. This allows users to wake their own PCs using a friendly web-interface. This software based solution was a pragmatic approach that allowed users to use their existing desktops avoided expensive replacement of existing hardware. The solution delivers a comprehensive quick win and significantly enhances an energy saving initiative.

“As there is significant financial pressure on the sector at this time, solutions that build upon existing infrastructure do offer genuine cost effectiveness.”

The WakeMyPC software required quickly implemented and very minor changes to the university’s network configuration. WakeMyPC integrated with the university’s existing security authentication system and ensured a secure way to implement Wake-On-LAN. After initial testing the IS team rapidly enabled WakeMyPC across the entire estate.

The project was publicised through the university intranet and went live in March 2011.

“Our main aim was to maximise the number of PCs under active power management and effect organisation-wide change, without impacting on anyone’s productivity or ability to do their work when desired. We wanted to achieve the largest possible financial savings and reductions in associated CO₂ emissions, without compromising academic and administrative output.”

Following the successful deployment of WakeMyPC the university has 96% take-up of power management on staff PCs with only essential experimental equipment and core administrative systems being opted out. The resultant implementation has achieved an estimated reduction of 600 tonnes per year of CO₂ providing a useful contribution of over 4% of the University's targeted annual saving for 2015. The financial saving is also significant. The project required minimal staff time and network changes.

“Studying the figures for one week before and one week after activation, the savings are equivalent to 1.96 tonnes of CO₂ or £325 every day”

By using PowerMAN in tandem with WakeMyPC the project's main aims have been achieved:

- To maximise the number of PC's under active power management
- To implement organisation-wide change without impacting on productivity or the ability of end-users to do their work when desired

“In large organisations with devolved management structures it is often difficult to effect wholesale behavioural change. Solutions such as WakeMyPC allow the central organisation to deliver change without necessarily having to enforce a change in individual's behaviour.”

“The University of Nottingham is happy to act as a reference site for this solution and share the benefit of our experience in achieving such a successful outcome with the rest of the sector”.

About Data Synergy



Data Synergy is a British company based in Sheffield. We have over 10 years' experience developing and supporting software solutions for enterprise PC deployment and management. We do not resell other vendors' products and do all our development, sales and support from our UK base.

Our products have evolved through listening to customer ideas and applying our unrivalled knowledge of PC internals. If you have a suggestion for a new product or feature we would love to talk to you.

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