

Moreland School District Success Story

Sun Ray™ Appliances help provide Moreland Schools with Equal Access to Technology

Sun™ ONE
Open Net Environment



Key Highlights

Organization:

Moreland School District, San Jose, CA
K-8 School District—9 Schools, 4200 students

Industry/Market:

Primary and Secondary (K-12) Education

Customer Environment:

- Sun Fire™ 280R servers
- Sun Fire 480R server
- Sun Ray™ 1 appliances
- Sun Ray 100 appliances
- Sun Ray 150 appliances
- Sun Blade™ workstation
- Solaris™ Operating Environment
- StarOffice™ Software Suite
- Netscape Navigator™

Key Objectives:

- Web-based environment for administrators, teachers, and students
- Easy to use and easy to upgrade
- Reliable, cost-efficient solution without the administrative hassles

Key Benefits:

- Improves reliability
- Increases productivity gains
- Eliminates software loading and updating at the desktop
- Easy maintenance with Web-based administration tools
- Provides simultaneous access to applications hosted across multiple platforms

“I am only beginning to recognize the impact of the Sun relationship with Moreland. I recognize that it is a new paradigm for computing and I know we will continue to explore and exploit this network-centric model.”

— Les Adelson, Moreland School District's Superintendent

As the first rural school district in California, Moreland first opened its doors in 1850 to just a few students. Today, Moreland has grown to include seven elementary schools and two middle schools (4,200 students). Moreland prides itself on providing rich educational experiences and resources to students of all ethnic backgrounds.

Similar to most school districts in the United States, Moreland schools were either predominately PCs or predominately Macintosh. The majority of these desktop PCs were reaching end of life.

“We were at a point where we needed to make a decision between spending available technology money on updating the aging and out of date PCs and Macintoshes versus trying a new solution, entirely,” explains Mike Jones, Moreland School District's director of information technology.

“We looked extensively at the Sun Ray™ pilot program with Payne Elementary and we also looked at the competing product that was implemented at one of our other schools. In addition, we looked at three to four other, so-called, thin-client products. In the end, we found that Sun Microsystems' Sun Ray appliance was the most unique. The other products all had the same look and feel. Sun was the only one that had a really unique approach. It is a true ‘thin client,’ with no operating system, no moving parts, and a five-year warranty—and we liked that different approach,” says Jones.

Sun Ray appliances are simple, plug-and-work desktops, which run no local software and never need to be upgraded. Teachers are free to teach, while the administration, system maintenance, and upgrades are left to the IT experts who manage the servers. Sun's innovative Hot Desk technology enables users to instantly access their own personal sessions and work in progress from any appliance in the workgroup—providing anytime, anywhere learning. Smart cards, similar in size to a credit card, deliver secure access to the system and enable easy mobility—users can withdraw their smart card to stop mid-sentence in an application, then continue where they left off by re-inserting their smart card into any Sun Ray desktop on the school's network.

Access to the Global Community via e-learning

With a network compliant strategy, everyone has equal access to technology because it's all coming from a central server.

"Sun Ray desktops help deliver equal access to technology. With the Sun Ray environment, if we upgrade the central Sun server, all the Sun Ray desktops automatically get upgraded — everybody benefits. Whereas with the old systems, we could only upgrade a percentage of the systems, so some people benefited and some ended up with hand-me-down systems," says Jones.

Currently, six of Moreland's schools are using the Sun Fire™ 280R servers along with the Sun Ray appliances. Each school has at least 32 Sun Ray appliances.

With the new Sun architecture in place, more students and teachers have access to the global community via e-learning. Students have the tools that will help them build knowledge by interacting with the world around them. They can communicate on a global level using new mediums including multimedia StarOffice™ software suite and other programs, content portals, search engines, and electronic libraries. This means that education at Moreland is student-centered and the learner can construct his or her own meaning from the experience.

The teachers and administrators are using the Sun Ray desktops to send e-mails to fellow teachers and parents, to do lesson planning, and create lesson templates. The Sun Ray desktops provide a simple-to-use tool to easily communicate and be more productive.

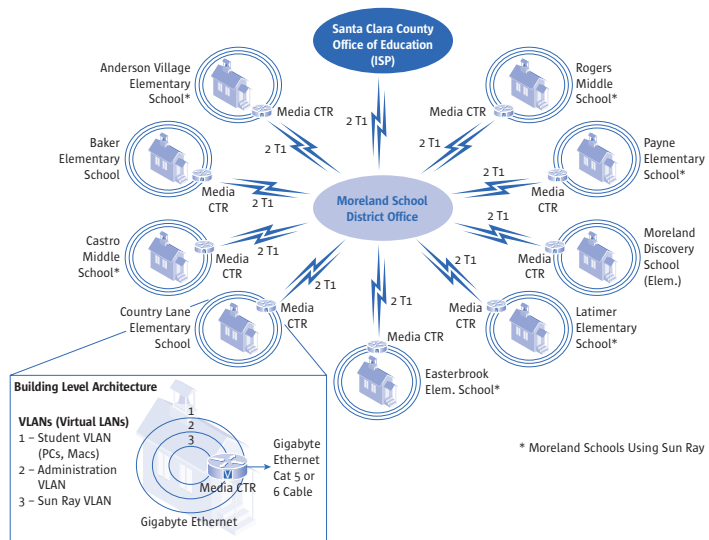
"Moreland's partnership with Sun Microsystems has been a wonderful support and resource to the district. Not only have we felt that our migration to fat server/thin-client technology has been a step in the right direction, but we have also felt that through Sun's support we have found new and better ways to integrate technology into the work of our staff and students," says Honey Berg, Moreland School District's director of instructional projects.

Berg adds, "District wide, we have standardized on EdMin software, 10 Minute Publisher, netTrekker, Classwell Learning Group's Classwell Online, bigchalk products, and SIRSI's library software, in addition to

Sun's StarOffice software. We have had the opportunity to review new programs that are aligned with the focus of using technology as a component of meaningful curriculum."

"I am only beginning to recognize the impact of the Sun relationship with Moreland. To say we are excited about Sun, and their interest and support of the Moreland schools would be mild. I have not ever seen this kind of relationship, which is empowering, not demanding. I also recognize that it is a new paradigm for computing and I think we will continue to explore and exploit this network-centric model," says Les Adelson, Moreland School District's superintendent.

Moreland School District WAN Architecture



"The district utilizes the Santa Clara County office of Education as our ISP, connected directly to the district by T1s. We utilize a 'hub and spoke' infrastructure which provides a pair of T1s from each building to the district. Within each site the building LAN may vary somewhat, but we are adhering to the plan of maintaining separate VLANs (Virtual Local Area Networks)."

— Mike Jones, Director of Information Technology, Moreland School District