



The REMC 10 consortium of Regional Educational Media Centers serves the public and parochial schools in Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola Counties in Michigan. By leveraging its buying power, REMC10 is able to save districts money while providing schools with high-end technical products and services that members would not be able to afford individually. REMC 10 operates a high-speed fiber-optic network that connects the 23 local schools and three intermediate school districts in the Thumb of Michigan.

Challenges

- » Enable IT support technicians to service thousands of devices
- » Cut travel time from classroom to classroom and to remote counties
- » Provide a well-rounded solution that manages, maintains, and secures using remote access
- » Stay within the consortium's limited budget while still providing top-level support

Solution

TeamViewer enabled REMC 10 consortium members to stay within their budget, giving IT support staff a much-needed solution to fulfill their mission of empowering students, educators, and staff. With TeamViewer, personnel can provide support for a variety of devices — whether down the hall or across the county — quickly and efficiently.

TeamViewer Helps Schools Focus on Education Instead of IT Issues

Access to effective educational resources is crucial for young people to grow and thrive into adulthood.

Technology is a driving factor in this mission, and having reliable support for a variety of devices is key to keeping students engaged in learning.

Located in an area known as the Thumb of Michigan, the Regional Educational Media Center 10 (REMC 10) provides its member districts with services including extended network connectivity, shared Internet, data center and e-libraries. Included in the region are a few rural districts, spread out across several counties.

REMC 10 provides students with the technology they need while keeping costs down by consolidating the requests of all 26 school districts. The savings obtained by leveraging the buying power of the consortium are passed on to the school districts, who can then obtain high-end services that they would not be able to afford individually. Services include IT support for some districts.

Robert Frost, Information Systems Coordinator at Tuscola Intermediate School District and Director of REMC 10, says, "Some of the schools in our service area don't have their own IT staff, so REMC and ISD help provide technical support services for several of the other districts as well. And we have a central data center with about 250 virtual servers, that almost all of the districts utilize."

Some of the larger schools in the district have their own IT support person to serve all of the staff and student body. Roy Hickman, Technology Director for Brown City Community Schools, individually supports about 830 students. "I don't have any staff under me, although I do have some student aids that help me out as part of their computer class."

Between the elementary and high schools, Hickman supports about 500 computers. By adding all the phones, printers, and additional machines, this totals more 2,000 devices to support.

With a tight budget, limited IT support staff, and a mission to empower students, educators and staff, REMC 10 schools needed a remote support solution to enable them to provide support for a variety of devices — whether down the hall or across the county — affordably, quickly, and efficiently. Additional requirements — such as robust security features for data protection compliance and mobile remote accessibility — could only be met by one solution: TeamViewer.

Unleashing Opportunities for Remote Support

Hickman was familiar with the free version of TeamViewer at home, using it to help his family and friends. When it was time to find the most effective remote support solution for his district, Hickman immediately turned to TeamViewer.



"Back in the day I would use VPN to access the network, and then open a remote desktop session with a particular computer," he explains. "Simply getting connected was very involved; I couldn't focus on what I needed to do with the remote computer because I had to deal with all the issues with the connection."

Since discovering all the features of TeamViewer, Hickman hasn't missed his old VPN solution.

"TeamViewer's file transfer features are just awesome. Remote control options, of course, are probably the flagship feature of the product, so it was just an easy choice," he adds. "Plus, I like being able to leave a note on the screen and the Wake on Lan (WOL) features. I can do so much more with TeamViewer."

Multiplying the Impact of a Team of One

Now Hickman can fix several issues in the time it used to take to make one support call. Every minute counts when you are a team of one, especially in the case of IT support. A problem that takes just minutes to fix could wind up being an hour-long call.

"Just walking 10 minutes each way to service a device in addition to my other daily duties makes it hard to stick to a schedule," explains Hickman. "Using TeamViewer to remote in to the other computer not only eliminates travel time, but also gets the teacher or student back up and running quicker."

Because Hickman alone is running IT support for the entire district, going on vacation would ordinarily mean that Brown City Community schools might be left without support.

"Not so," explains Hickman. "I have been able to solve an issue with payroll from a top of a mountain while on vacation. I had just enough cell signal on my phone, so I remotely accessed my computer and addressed a server glitch, just as if I had been there." With the payroll deadline being met and the issue resolved, Hickman reiterates that he would not have been able to accomplish that feat without TeamViewer.

Other REMC 10 IT support staff agree that TeamViewer has positively impacted how they do their jobs.

Tom Kuras at the Huron Intermediate School District (HISD) is responsible for not only HISD, but three other schools as well.

"The biggest benefit for me has been the ability to address minor things without having to physically go to a different building or district," Kuras says. "I feel it makes me more productive because I am not wasting time walking between buildings and getting dragged off task."

Scott Miklovic at the Lakers School District adds, "I love TeamViewer. It works great from my phone. I've had to pull off the road and use it on a few occasions, and it's slick."

The TeamViewer adeptness and reliability enable IT support staff to support 2,000-plus devices without increasing headcount and budget expenditures.

"Without TeamViewer for remote support, we would have to increase our headcount," says Frost.

Increasing headcount is not always an option with a typical K-12 budget. By driving down costs with TeamViewer, the district can devote funds to important initiatives.

TeamViewer not only helps directors like Hickman do their jobs better, but also allows them to spend more quality time at home with their families.

"I used to have to work late nights and not get home until whenever. Now I'm getting out of work at a reasonable time, and can finish my work when I am with my family in the evening."

Demystifying Device Diversity

Not only does the REMC 10 consortium cover a lot of territory, but there is a diverse selection of technologies that teams are responsible for supporting.

"It's definitely a big geographic region, covering three counties," explains REMC 10 director Robert Frost. "Most of the devices that the districts utilize are Windows 7 or Windows 10 PCs. We do have a pretty substantial number of Chromebooks throughout and a slightly smaller number of iPads and servers."

With cross-platform compatibility, TeamViewer gives IT directors remote access through any device for any device. Plus, it's compatible with a range of Windows operating systems and servers.

"When you're trying to deal with machines from multiple districts and not all districts are on the same Windows domain,

it can be a headache for other remote support products," says Frost. "TeamViewer really simplifies the process, and we can connect regardless of which domain they're a member of."

Plus, with two-factor authentication, TeamViewer enables confidential information to stay confidential.

"I knew I didn't have to worry about the wrong person getting my username and password," adds Hickman. "Two-factor authentication protects us from harm."

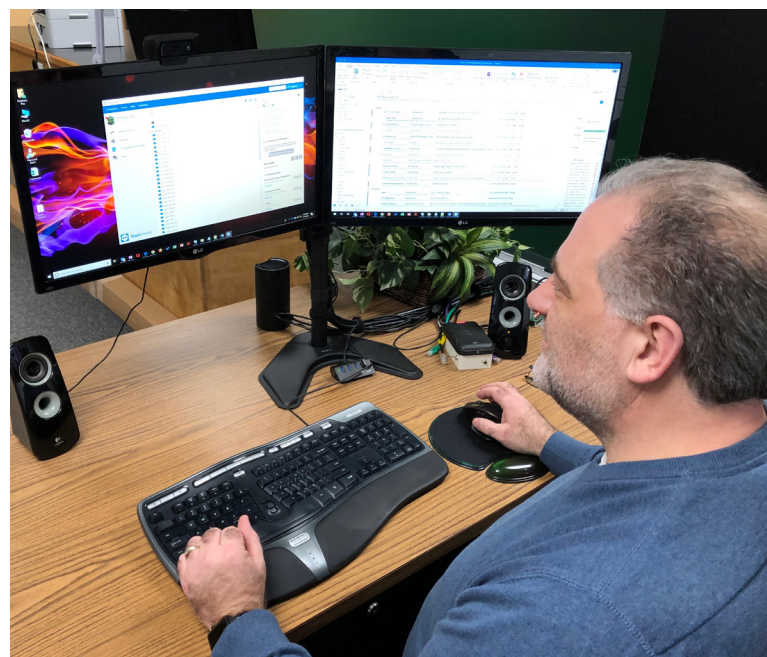
Plus, because TeamViewer is compatible across an assortment of devices, it doesn't stop at the computers in the classroom. In Hickman's district, the maintenance lead uses the TeamViewer phone app to control the HVAC computer, monitoring the school's air conditioning system and managing the environmental expectations of students and teachers.

Frost adds, "I think the value of TeamViewer just increases dramatically when you factor in all those other uses."

Enhancing the Customer Experience

Spending less time traveling between incident locations and feeling inspired to solve problems quicker has enabled REMC 10's IT support personnel to provide a more meaningful customer experience.

"I am not out as much hustling from point A to point B since I can remotely solve any issue," explains Hickman. "Instead, now I make a point to get face time with people and have casual conversations that are stress-free."

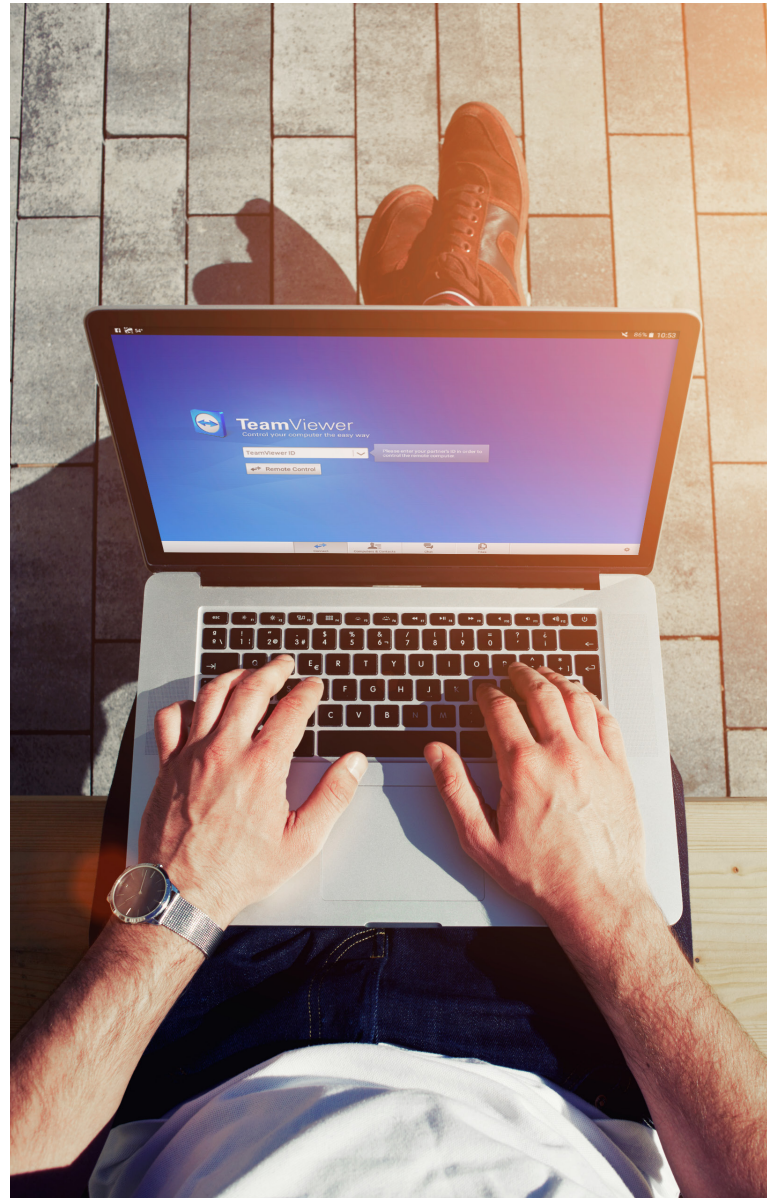


"TeamViewer has sped up the response time to support tickets, which has improved the relationship between the IT department and its customers," says Brian Wisneski at the Tuscola Intermediate School District. "The TeamViewer accessibility to click and connect is wonderful and saves a lot of time by not requiring you to continually type in your credentials to gain access to remote machines."

Frost agrees, "Being able to have high customer satisfaction with the clients goes a long way."

TeamViewer has multiplied the capabilities of the REMC 10 IT support staff to provide students with access to outstanding educational opportunities, as well as supporting the work of the teaching, administrative, and maintenance staff.

"I couldn't do what I do or be as effective without TeamViewer," says Hickman. "With all the features, security, and how easy it is to use, I think it's the best remote access software out there."



TeamViewer

TeamViewer is a leading global provider of global connectivity solutions for remote access, support, and team collaboration. TeamViewer's flagship product has been activated on more than 1.8 billion devices to support over 40M sessions on any given day.

For more information about TeamViewer, visit:
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