

Success Stories



University of Memphis

Raritan KVM-over-IP extends secure access across campus at one of the South's largest universities

The Customer

Founded in 1912 as a teacher training college, the University of Memphis has become one of the largest universities in the southeast United States. The University offers bachelor's degrees in more than 50 majors and 70 concentrations, master's degrees in 47 subjects and doctoral degrees in 23 disciplines. Located in a residential section of Memphis, the University of Memphis campus is situated on 1,160 acres with nearly 200 buildings.

The Challenge

According to Robert Jackson, Systems Administrator, University of Memphis, the IT department was faced with the challenge of managing the 41 servers that support the development and production environments used by various administrative units spread across the sprawling campus. One particularly daunting task was managing different levels of access to servers and network devices for the different user groups. "As the university has expanded, so have our IT needs in accessing and controlling the growing number of servers on the Wintel platform," Jackson said. "The old model of having bulky cables for these systems became unmanageable over a period of time. We needed a scalable KVM solution that could grow with us."

The Solution

Jackson did his homework on KVM vendors. His research turned up the fact that Raritan had won several awards for its KVM products. Probing further, Jackson went online to public forums to chat with other universities about their KVM solutions. His research in these forums convinced him to choose Raritan.



Jackson selected Raritan's Paragon® KVM switch with Cat5 Simplicity™, adding the IP-Reach® remote access gateway. He configured one user station for the local console in the server room and another one with the IP-Reach unit for remote access. "The Raritan solution enables us to manage our network devices without having to physically travel to the server room. IP-Reach also gives us the ability to see the boot sequence from our desks, rather than having to be at the local console," he said.

Customer:

The University of Memphis

Challenge:

One of the largest universities in the Southeast needed a scalable KVM solution offering multi-user access and remote access capability.

Solution:

Raritan's Paragon KVM switch plus remote access via IP-Reach.

Benefits:

The University of Memphis cut costs, reduced cable clutter and improved the effectiveness of IT operations. With remote access to KVM switches, multiple systems administrators can access KVM switches simultaneously, reducing foot traffic and time spent in the server room.

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"We were looking for a solution that enables multiple systems administrators to access the KVM switches simultaneously," said Jackson. "IP-Reach enables us to easily maintain and build our servers, since more than one system administrator has access to them at the same time." Paragon's built-in user authorization schemes let Jackson set the levels and types of access for each user or group of users, regardless of their physical location on campus. For added security, Jackson gave only select users authorization to access the servers remotely, via IP-Reach.

The Results

Jackson was impressed with Raritan's level of technical support when a minor set-up issue arose during the installation. "We were impressed with how the Raritan tech support rep walked us through the steps to resolve the situation by changing the configuration settings. These changes resulted in an excellent, out-of-the-box experience," he said.

In addition to reducing the number of cables in his racks, Jackson has seen significant improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of his IT operations since installing the Paragon solution. In particular, by allowing remote access to his KVM switch, multiple systems administrators can access the KVM switch simultaneously. This reduces the amount of time they spend in the server room.



The Future

As its operations continue to grow in size and complexity, the University of Memphis has already outgrown its first Paragon and installed another, connected to the first. Jackson also plans on using the Paragon Computer Interface Modules (CIMs) to provide seamless access to any server, independent of the platform or connection. "The unique design of the CIMs provides us with the flexibility to disconnect the server from the KVM switch without rebooting the Windows® environment to detect the keyboard/mouse," said Jackson.

Raritan, Inc. is a leading supplier of solutions for managing IT infrastructure equipment and the mission-critical applications and services that run on it. Raritan was founded in 1985, and since then has been making products that are used to manage IT infrastructures at more than 75,000 network data centers, computer test labs and multi-workstation environments around the world. From the small business to the enterprise, Raritan's complete line of compatible and scalable IT management solutions offers IT professionals the most reliable, flexible and secure in-band and out-of-band solutions to manage data center equipment applications and services, while improving operational productivity. More information on the company is available at Raritan.com.

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