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Macedonia Becomes First Nation To Provide Computer Workstations For Every Student

NComputing's Breakthrough Virtual PC Technology Enables 180,000 Low-cost Workstations on Classroom Desktops Nationwide

REDWOOD CITY, CALIF., Sept. 17 – NComputing, provider of the world's most affordable solutions for PC access, today announced that its multi-user virtual desktop software and low-cost virtual PC terminals will be used to equip every school child in the Republic of Macedonia with a rich individual computer experience. The most ambitious national undertaking ever to standardize all schools around a single technology platform, the "Computer for Every Child" project of the Macedonia Ministry of Education and Science will deploy 180,000 NComputing-enabled workstation seats, enough to provide virtually every elementary and secondary school student in the nation with his or her own classroom computing device.

NComputing's multi-user virtual desktop software and low-cost virtual PC terminals, along with supporting Linux-based PCs, were proven in Macedonia tests to deliver a rich PC experience at less than half the cost of any other proposed solution, including low-cost desktop and laptop PCs and other thin client options, according to Ivo Ivanovski, Macedonia's Minister for the Information Society. Huge additional advantages in reduced maintenance and replacement costs made the choice of NComputing even more compelling. With half the students attending school in the morning, and half attending in the afternoon, 180,000 workstations will provide a 1-to-1 computing experience—one virtual PC at each student's desk—for the country's entire public school student population.

"The Computer for Every Child initiative is the largest and most important education project undertaken in the 15-year history of the Republic of Macedonia," according to Ivanovsky. "Our goal is to build a knowledge-based economy in which our entire workforce is educated in using information and communication technology within the next five years. Yet, like most school systems around the world, Macedonia's education system has limited financial and infrastructural resources to address this challenge. By adopting NComputing's low-cost virtual PC technology, Macedonia is taking the lead in providing computer-based education for school children."

“We at NComputing believe that providing PC access to the next billion users—those who cannot afford the cost of an individual PC—is the single biggest challenge facing our industry today. Perhaps the most important segment of this under-served mass market is school children, including students in the United States and other developed countries, as well as those in developing nations,” said Stephen Dukker, Chairman and CEO of NComputing. “We’re gratified that NComputing’s technology can be an important part of the solution in Macedonia and around the world.”

NComputing’s corporate mission is to provide affordable PC access to under-resourced markets around the world, including schools and users in developing and developed countries. The company’s revolutionary technology allows a single PC to be shared by multiple simultaneous users—each running their own applications. Setup is simple, and begins with software on the shared PC that creates multiple virtual user desktops. Standard monitors, keyboards and mice then plug into very low-cost, highly reliable virtual PCs (also known as access terminals). As a major leap forward in green computing, NComputing solutions draw between one and five watts of power for each added user, versus 115 for a typical PC. Neither IT staff nor end users require special training, and the system is compatible with Windows, Linux and standard PC applications. Pricing is as low as \$70 per seat.

With NComputing’s X300, up to seven users can simultaneously share a single PC. The cost and power savings are critical in school deployments, including in Macedonia, because budgets and electricity are often limited. Macedonia also chose NComputing’s technology because maintenance and replacement costs are a fraction of what they are for traditional PC deployments. NComputing’s solid-state virtual PC terminals have no moving parts and require little or no maintenance, so the principal maintenance costs follow only the shared PCs and monitors. In addition, in an upgrade cycle to newer PCs, only the PCs themselves, not the virtual PC terminals, need to be replaced.

Through a global network of resellers, NComputing also offers the L-series, which connects via Ethernet at any distance from a shared PC or server on either Local Area Networks or over the Internet. The number of L-series virtual PCs supported is limited only by the power of the shared PC. Hundreds can be supported on virtualized servers.

When completed, Macedonia’s Computer for Every Child initiative will have deployed approximately 160,000 NComputing virtual PC terminals and 20,000 NComputing-enabled PCs (which each also support a student on the attached monitor) running the Ubuntu Linux-based operating system. The Haier Company, a diversified manufacturer and PC maker, and one of China’s largest and most respected companies, won the contract for procurement and installation. The project will enable a range of innovative educational programs, including interactive web-based classes in which specialized experts teach lessons in such areas as mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics to multiple schools and classrooms around the country.

NComputing’s multi-user system software and low-cost virtual PC terminals represent the next generation of thin computing, in which multi-user computing finally becomes affordable and accessible, and the user-experience equals that of a dedicated PC. The Macedonia project is at the same time, the largest known thin client and desktop Linux deployment ever undertaken.

“This project would not have been possible 5 years ago.” said Ivanovski. “Today’s least expensive desktop PCs are so powerful we use less than 10% of their capacity and NComputing’s technology puts this wasted power to work.”

In a brief 18 months after starting active shipments, NComputing has sold more than 500,000 seats, including more than 200,000 to U.S. schools, providing technology that addresses the needs of under-served markets worldwide, as well as those of small business and enterprise customers. The company’s technology is being sold and deployed in more than 80 countries – including thousands of schools, corporate and small business offices, and villages and cities in Africa, Europe, Asia and South America.

About NComputing, Inc.

Founded with the goal of making computing affordable for everyone, NComputing, Inc. is a privately held software and hardware technology design and manufacturing company with offices in Australia, Canada, China, Germany, India, Korea, Poland, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Headquartered in Redwood City, CA, the company's patented technologies drastically lower costs, improve manageability and reduce energy consumption. The current product lines deliver virtual PC computing solutions that are as low as \$70 per user, affordable enough for even the smallest organization yet powerful enough for enterprise-scale applications.