



University College, London (UCL) Eases Purchasing Restrictions and Extends IT Budget with the UIU

University College, London

University College, London (UCL) is one of the top five universities in the UK. The university is made up of 72 academic departments with eight faculties based over multiple sites throughout London. The Information Systems department provides IT facilities for both staff and students throughout the university. With such a large and dispersed operation, managing the university's IT needs from its Bloomsbury location is very challenging. Information Systems supports over 3,000 PCs under its 'Managed PCs' service and is required to maintain workstations that hold identical software and numerous types of drivers in a cost-effective and scalable manner.

"We needed a solution that was simple, yet thorough."

Simple Cloning was not the Answer

Software-based cloning was already in place at UCL. The cloning package UCL uses to update its computers is a proprietary program, developed by the technical team and based on PXE/Linux and NTFSclone. Even with that, UCL still had to create and maintain 15-20 master images to

support the various brands of desktops at multiple sites within the organization. The technological limitations restricted the Information Systems team to using an increasingly limited range of hardware suppliers, as every hardware change could inherently require a new image to be created and/or deployed.

Maria Darmon, Assistant Director of Information Systems, said, "Maintaining all of those separate images was a complex and time consuming task. We needed a solution that was simple yet thorough, which allowed us to create a single image that could be deployed

across the university in a short span of time. We also needed to be much more accommodating in our ability to support these images across a range of different hardware from contracted suppliers." She continued, "Another area for concern was an urgent need to deploy updates to our systems. Multiple images had to be updated in order for us to target critical client systems on a frequent basis."

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Hardware-Independent Images

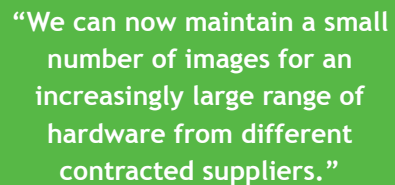
The Universal Imaging Utility (UIU) was UCL's solution. The UIU enables users to prepare a single, hardware-independent hard drive Image that can easily be deployed to any desktop or laptop regardless of manufacturer, thus greatly reducing the time and expense associated with image creation and maintenance. Using UIU, UCL is now able to maintain just a few master images to use throughout its environment of disparate Desktops.

Explains Adam Murphy, President of Big Bang LLC, "Rolling-out software updates and setting up new desktops and laptops can be managed within a matter of minutes, and a previously complex and time consuming operation can be transformed into a simple, straightforward and fully automated task. This enables IT departments to drastically reduce the time and money spent on image creation, maintenance, and deployment by streamlining the cloning process. This allows IT resources to focus on more business-critical tasks."

UIU Extends IT Budget

Simon Walsh, IT Purchasing Officer at Information Systems, UCL, said, "Before we started using UIU, our purchasing options for PCs were very limited. Maintaining core components over a protracted period of time was very difficult and not very cost effective. We discovered that we were unable to take full advantage of advancing trends in technology and advantageous price breaks. We often found ourselves locked into purchasing a particular model for a longer period of time than we would have hoped for in order to avoid having to create and maintain yet another Image."

Maria Darmon concluded: "Following the introduction of UIU, we can now maintain a small number of images for an increasingly large range of hardware from different contracted suppliers. Images are now faster and easier to maintain and allow us to make much better use of our staff resources."



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About the UIU

The UIU is developed by Big Bang LLC, a Milwaukee, WI-based software development, training, and consulting company. Learn more about the UIU at www.uiu4u.com.

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