



“2X will remain at the core of our ICT delivery well into the future”

- Dave Foster, Bridgwater College



Bridgwater College Passes Desktop Efficiency and Continuity Test with 2X Software

Bridgwater College in Somerset is a highly successful multi-site provider of education and training boasting Beacon status and an Ofsted Outstanding rating. It caters for over 16,000 full and part-time students and employs more than 1,000 staff across its two main centers and other outreach locations across the southwest.

Providing excellent service and computing facilities to its students and staff cost effectively is a key element in Bridgwater’s IT strategy. Access to IT facilities is at the core of much of its effective learning and it has to maintain a large number of concurrently and constantly used desktops across its varied locations.

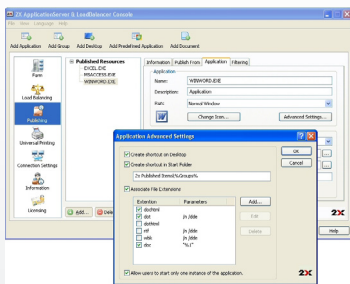
Bridgwater originally chose to pursue a server-based computing and thin client desktop IT strategy to achieve cost-effectiveness and control in serving a large and varied user base across different sites. Effective load balancing of users’ desktops to server resources was essential due to the “big switch on” that happens daily in educational establishments.

“Because the organisation runs to strict timetables, we frequently have many users logging on to desktops at the same time, said Dave Foster, Head of IT Services at Bridgwater College. “We realized that effective load balancing was critical if we were to maintain a cost effective server based computing infrastructure that could deal with these specific user dynamics.”

Over time, Bridgwater’s server upgrades have increased the number of users that can be provisioned from each server, extending the criticality of its load balancing. “We have 600 users logged onto the system at any one time and have reduced our server numbers by approximately two thirds in the last five years. This gives us the advantage of consolidating server budgets but means that we needed a best in class but cost-effective load balancing solution.”

Not convinced of the ROI it would achieve from load balancing products within market leading virtualisation suites like Citrix, Bridgwater chose to investigate alternatives. “The cost of some load balancing solutions meant that it would have been cheaper to upgrade our server infrastructure and incorporate a ‘cushion’ of capacity than pay for a load balancer that would efficiently manage desktop provisioning from our existing server resources,” said Foster. “But by surveying the market we realised there were far simpler, easier and more cost-effective ways of doing this.”

Bridgwater chose to use **2X LoadBalancer** working in harmony with Microsoft’s own load balancing tools. Users logging in to terminal servers are first connected to the Microsoft load balancing environment which selects server resources from a number of 2X gateways.



The simple, straightforward format of the 2X Console allows administrators to easily load balance terminal server sessions in an intuitive manner.

The **2X LoadBalancer** continually calculates the load across each server and feeds that information to the gateways to ensure correct selection and routing of users to the least-loaded terminal server. This simple and effective solution is invaluable for Bridgwater as Foster explains. “In the space of ten minutes we could have 500 users logging on and requiring instant classroom-based access to IT resources as part of timed lessons. Effective delivery of learning now requires 99.9% success in providing access. The **2X LoadBalancer** is the critical link in ensuring that terminals are correctly mapped to server resources.”

“It has become even more critical over time as we have sought to rationalise our server infrastructure on fewer machines, each provisioning many more users. Recent 2X LoadBalancer upgrades enabling 64-bit adoption have massively increased the potential to do so.”

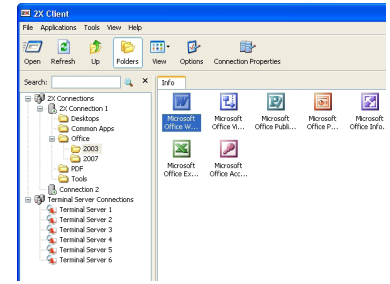
Since using **2X LoadBalancer**, Bridgwater College has been able to maintain a highly cost-effective and reliable desktop IT infrastructure meeting the needs of its large concurrent user base across multiple sites. With ICT availability an essential part of the college’s outstanding performance as a learning institution, load balancing and 2X have become some of the most important aspects of its technology environment.

Because 2X is deployed via a per-server licensing model compared to the per-user licensing of most load balancing solutions, it provides scalability at a far lower cost. This has enabled Bridgwater to achieve an impressive ROI against the cost of increasing its server infrastructure and would not have been possible with competing load balancing solutions.

2X’s ease of use and simple, rapid deployment makes it very simple for IT managers to install and operate. For Bridgwater this meant that it could start realizing the benefits of the product immediately and did not have to employ significant overhead to manage the system.

Bridgwater’s success with 2X at the core of its server based computing environment were proven by its recent analysis of converting desktops from thin clients to PCs. Foster comments, “with 2X in place and able to optimise load balancing across our server resources we have saved significantly. 2X will remain at the core of our ICT delivery well into the future.”

About 2X 2X Software Ltd develops enterprise server-based virtual computing software, enabling desktop virtualization and application streaming on personal computers and thin client devices. Its product line, which includes the award-winning **2X VirtualDesktopServer** and **2X ApplicationServer**, is easily scalable, installable, and manageable with **straightforward licensing**, resulting in product **prices** far below those of competitors. For more information, please visit: <http://www.2x.com>.



2X LoadBalancer allows for effective resource-based load balancing based on memory, CPU and more.



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