SEH

Dongleserver myUTN-80

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Struggling to Stretch Grant Money in Life Sciences Research, University of Missouri (Legally) Shares Costly Software Licenses Across Labs

Researchers share five licenses of VisualSonics' VEVO 2100 Imaging System software among dozens of PCs on four campuses and one license of Data Science International's Ponemah software. All within compliance of end-user license agreements.

The Premises

The Dalton Cardiovascular Research Center -- a division of the Office of Research at the University of Missouri -- has begun getting more use out of its research analysis software by virtually passing the programs' physical USB license dongles around campus. As of July 11, the critical network element enabling researchers to virtually connect to the Ponemah software dongle and release it for another's use is SEH Technology's myUTN-80 dongle server.

Dalton System Administrator, Jason Lee, first settled on the myUTN-80 while extending the use of another research analysis application, VisualSonics' Vevo LAB, among 30 PCs in five separate labs. He has since expanded potential use to all 17 labs at Dalton and any other lab associated with the University system, without any added costs and with minimal effort. Like many vendors with extremely small markets and expensive product equipment, VisualSonics and Data Sciences International (publisher of Ponemah) still rely on USB dongles, inserted in the user's PC, to verify licensed use of their software.

„We generate data from the VEVO 2100 system, a million-dollar setup with its own dongle that takes real-time, high-resolution sonogram images and movies," says Lee. „To maintain that unit we must charge labs by the hour, so principal investigators, concerned about grant budgets, prefer to minimize their time on the imaging equipment. With SEH's product we can install the analysis part of the software on their own systems remotely, and they can access the dongle to analyze acquired data." Four Vevo dongles „float" to any authorized user (university researcher or business partner), who pays the center a weekly fee that is substantially less than the hourly fee to use the image acquisition equipment. One dongle floats between Dalton's own labs.

The Solution

With up to eight USB dongles inserted in its covered and lockable backplane, the myUTN-80 receives the dongle-seeking handshake from the research software on the user's PC. It returns verification, just as if the dongle were attached locally. Because it maintains the one-user-per-dongle limit, it keeps within the vendor's EULA. But by enabling remote, sequential sharing, it multiplies the license's effective use. It also prevents the loss or theft of easily misplaced dongles, costing $3,000 to $4,000 apiece.

The university's central IT department was already using another vendors' dongle server when Lee first looked into remote sharing, but it required rebooting when adding dongles or changing a dongle configuration. The myUTN-80 not only eliminated the reboot for these changes, but came in at a lower price per port, provided the required flexibility and drastically lowered researchers' dependence on IT. Its administration software made it very easy to assign dongles to PCs, and its command-line control allowed Lee to make it 'dead-simple' for researchers to grab and release the license within each lab.

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> Jason Lee, Dalton System Administrator

The myUTN-80 Dongleserver makes software license dongles reliably and securely available on the network via eight USB 2.0 Hi-Speed ports.

The Results

„Setup was super simple," says Lee. „The client was small and non-invasive, using basic outbound-only queries to the server, thus alleviating the need for special firewall rules (at least in our environment) beyond the client system. Its use of command-line parameters to control its connection let us script and partially automate the setup process, making it easy for non-technical users to get the client going and connected."

Using scripting and an automation utility (AutoIT), Lee enables a remote PC to verify UTN client installation and create two basic shortcuts on its desktop: Enable and Disable. (If it finds no such client, the script automates its installation as well.) „Each lab accesses and releases its license simply by clicking the shortcuts," Lee explains. „We control access using the port key control feature of the myUTN web interface, and we can take our dongle back simply by changing the key."

An avid fan of SEH technology, Lee says, „It's quite amazing to find a product that literally fits like a glove in a project with such a broad scope of requirements. That just doesn't happen in the IT world, especially one as complex as a large university environment." He purchased the myUTN-80 dongle server from CDW and is considering a second as usage grows. The product is available from a worldwide network of distributors and resellers.

Dalton Cardiovascular Research Center

Investigators at the Dalton Cardiovascular Research Center, a division of the Office of Research at the University of Missouri, are making great strides toward understanding the causes of many diseases, including hypertension, cancer, cystic fibrosis and heart disease. With this understanding comes the potential for development of new and improved therapies, as well as multidisciplinary partnerships with state, national and international biochemistry, biological sciences, biological engineering, pharmacology, pathology and veterinary researchers. Dalton scientists obtain funding from and produce quality results for agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the U.S. Department of Defense among others. For further information, contact Jeff D. Sossamon, MU News Bureau, at sossamonj@umsystem.edu.

SEH Technology

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All SEH products are developed and produced at the company's headquarters in Bielefeld, Germany. U.S. headquarters are located in Phoenixville, PA, with offices across Europe, Asia and North America. To learn more, visit www.seh-technology.com, call 610-933-2088 or follow the company on Facebook or Twitter.

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