



For years the Academic Computer Center at Minnesota State University, Mankato had been using a manual head count system, where every hour a student worker went around to the computer labs and counted how many users were on each workstation.

Because we had grown to 30 labs it was becoming impossible to take head counts, so extrapolation became increasingly used. We would take the gathered information, manually key it into a spreadsheet, and then manually generate usage graphs. There was no immediate online statistics and reports were done at the end of the semester.

We were looking for an automated system that would perform these tasks, and considered writing our own system, as well as reviewed and tested other products. None of these options satisfied us. Computer Lab Solutions had just the system we were looking for. Their software was designed with every feature we needed, usertracker, lab usage graphing, and real time stats.

Computer Lab Solutions has created a complete, reliable software package that has been extremely well supported and backed by a professional support team. They have been great to work with.

Bryan Hoffman
Server Manager
Minnesota State University



National University of Ireland, Galway

Like many universities, the National University of Ireland, Galway found that certain labs on their campus formed lines as students waited for available computers while other labs, elsewhere on campus had open seats. In addition to the inefficient use of the school's labs, the University wanted to gain a better understanding of the usage of specific software licenses.

Brendan O'Looney, Principal Technical Specialist at the University, began looking for a solution and found Computer Lab Solutions in an internet search. LabStats was selected after a requirement analysis was completed and the packaged offerings from other suppliers were compared.

The setup and installation went smoothly. A pilot was undertaken for 6 months, after which the University's public access labs, totaling 700 PCs, were setup with the LabStats suite. The school's departmental labs, totaling 1,000 PCs are now also being managed by LabStats.

Brendan says, "There were no major problems in adapting the software to our situation. We had requirements which were not catered for in the original package; however our suggestions and ideas were frequently incorporated into future releases of LabStats. LabStats has given us a good picture of how the labs are used and has enabled us to better manage our software licenses."

LabStats makes it easy to publish real-time computer lab availability information online so students can easily see which labs have open computers. (See NUIG Lab Availability) Brendan is very satisfied with the capabilities of the LabStats suite and has recommended LabStats to other Universities.

Brendan O'Looney
Principal Technical Specialist
National University of Ireland, Galway



At Boise State University, each college has its own information technology department. Each department had been using a different method of collecting information. Some departments would use counters and manually count people in the lab at certain times while other labs would assign lab assistants to count heads. There were differences in how the data was reported as well. These factors made for very inconsistent reporting and nearly unusable data reports. It was difficult for the central IT department to determine how labs were being utilized.

Steve Henderson, a Lab Manager at Boise State University, hired a contractor to create a program for tracking lab usage in his department's computer labs. This solution was sufficient until the department added a lab, and the contractor had to be re-hired to try and scale the program. As a third lab was added, Steve realized that their in-house solution just wasn't easily scalable and he began looking for another solution.

"We were looking for a solution with three main criteria; scalability, stability, and minimal server requirements. Someone suggested we look into LabStats."

Steve had heard about LabStats online and decided to try a trial run. "We set up 100 machines to test LabStats. The install and setup was fast and easy. It was obvious that LabStats was the answer to our problems."

After the test, LabStats was rolled out across campus as a way to standardize the measurement of computer lab utilization. "At one point after installation, we experienced an issue where the LabStats interface would lock up. Technical support was very receptive and quickly resolved the issue with an update. We have been very satisfied with LabStats and with the support we've received. I'm Absolutely satisfied with product, will and continue to recommend it."

Steve Henderson
Lab Manager
Boise State University



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Brian Soule, Lab Coordinator at The University of Southern Mississippi was tasked with the job of finding a way of tracking the applications that students at the university were using. After learning about LabStats at SIGUCCS '07, he found the answer to that problem, and many more.

After the conference, Brian downloaded the 10 client trial version of LabStats. “I really pushed the trial version. I pulled all the reports from the 10 computers and was able to use the data in a presentation to my leadership team. After we purchased LabStats, the entire setup and install on 203 machines was completed without any problems.”

The ability to provide students with real-time computer lab status was one of the features that helped USM make the decision to invest in LabStats. The University is in the process of installing 42" monitors to display lab information for students. “In addition to helping students know which labs have open seats, LabStats has saved us money on software licenses that we have discovered we just don't need. We're cutting a certain application from 203 licenses to 25, saving us around \$10,000.”

Brian is the leader of the technology department's “Green Think Tank Team,” and has found that JuicePress, a product in the LabStats suite, is a valuable tool for conserving energy. With JuicePress, Brian can schedule power states of each lab, ensuring that computers are only running when they are needed. “I am very satisfied with LabStats and will continue to recommend it.”

Brian Soule
Lab Coordinator
University of Southern Mississippi



Chris Olance, from Adams State College, had been using a program called MonNet to track user activity on their network. It was a simple solution, but data had to be tediously pulled into an access database to generate any useful reports. Also, MonNet is no longer under development and there is no support available.

Chris needed a way to make better decisions on which labs to expand, and which ones to reduce or eliminate. “Eliminating computer labs can be very political. But with good numbers it is less subjective. With good reports I can prove to the administration that some labs are wasting money, and in some labs we have a need for expansion.”

Chris was introduced to LabStats at LabMan. Installation was fairly quick. “I ran it on a spare lab machine, and then moved it to a virtual machine. It was the first machine we virtualized. On the workstation, since we clone the machines (both Macs and PCs), we just added the agent. We even have some machines we network boot into Linux and we added the agent there. This gave us stats on how much they use Windows or Linux on that machine.”

Using LabStats, Chris has so far eliminated one lab. “I don’t just use it for stats. I use it to see how many people are logged in. I use it to see if the lab assistants are there and logged in. It gives me a way to confirm the lab assistant’s time sheets are correct. I like LabStats and would recommend it. I hope to buy JuicePress soon, as I know it will help save on energy costs.”

Chris Olance
Computing Services
Adams State College



The College of *St. Scholastica*

Our previous home-grown lab statistics program was high maintenance. We never had a full semester's worth of data. Finally this semester we have complete data on our lab usage because of Computer Lab Solutions LabStats! We love the live data in LabMaps, along with the built-in statistics that LabStats provides.

Another feature of the program helped us pinpoint a lab computer that was set to print in a different lab. Piles of paper began to stack up. Being able to track a user allowed us to see which computer they used and find the computer that was misdirecting the printouts.

The program was up and running with minimal effort. It is easy to use and understand without reading any directions. The one question I had when it came time to pull the statistics, was answered immediately and thoroughly via an e-mail to support@computerlabsolutions.com.

Thank you for making gathering lab statistics for budgeting purposes much easier, while adding other benefits to your program! We are adding the AppUse program next and I can't wait to reap the benefits of this program!

Peg Ocel
IT Manager of User Services
The College of St. Scholastica



University of Houston Clear Lake

As our labs grew by number and size with additional workstations, the out-of-date process of taking a manual headcount at random times throughout the day became less of a tool for making informed staffing and purchasing decisions than an experienced guess.

We explored several tools, looking at ease of setup, deployment, maintenance, and pricing. In addition, we wanted a tool that promoted easy data interpretation with dynamic data gathering features.

LabStats provided all of these attributes with the most economical pricing to boot. Currently, we are taking a look at Computer Lab Solutions' most recent feature addition, AppUse. As a small decentralized IT group, AppUse is more attractive to us than the other products on the market requiring a server platform and considerable setup and configuration.

Mark
Computing Lab Manager
University of Houston, Clear Lake



Prior to LabStats we used a manual system of tracking users in our lab. It was inefficient, incomplete, and very time-intensive for your computer lab support staff.

After a Google search for lab statistic software, we contacted Computer Lab Solutions and immediately received a free trial and instructions. Since we have a very large 125 seat lab, we also asked for a time limited trial for all seats so we could fully test network impact in a full production setting. We found LabStats scaled up beautifully with no issues whatsoever.

During the LabStats trial we also considered some home-grown database solutions, as well as a few other vendors, but the capabilities and concept did not compare to the flexibility of LabStats. In the End, we found LabStats to have the best performance, statistic capability, reporting, reliability, and ROI.

Installation was easy. It took no more than a few hours including initial install and configuration. We have since added a few custom tweaks such as our large 50 inch LCD LabMaps display and custome reporting from LabStats inserted into some of our library technology web pages. We have also coordinated the configuration of campus firewall settings to allow the display of LabStats active logins, usage, and maps, to campus housing and to the outside world so that patrons could verify if computers were available before heading out the lab.

<http://library.fgcu.edu/CTS/Technology/computer.htm>

The configuration is well documented and LabStats provides online FAQs for the most common questions that come up. Their support staff is equally great at answering some of the more complicated or customization questions one may have. Any questions we had were answered promptly and efficiently.

LabStats has not only provided a live mechanism to allow our students to check availability, but has paid for itself many times over for our complete ability to provide detailed stats on lab usage, times, percentage, how many FGCU students use our lab, usage trends, as well as aided in aligning staffing schedules with greater lab usage. It is absolutely invaluable in this respect.

We are absolutely satisfied with LabStats and recommend it with no reservations whatsoever. LabStats is a must for ANY computer lab environment, period.

Mario Bernardo
Technology Services
Florida Gulf Coast University



LabStats has taken the hassle and inconvenience out of counting users in our public computing areas. We used to do head counts every half hour, now LabStats has made this a simple, automated task. The stats that LabStats provides also gives us data that we couldn't have imagined having, such as numbers for exactly how many people utilized our computers last school year and how many times those users logged in. This has helped to show how much our systems are being used by our patrons.

We are in the process of implementing real-time data from LabStats on our website. This will provide users with information about our computers availability. Inclusion of our past statistics will provide data that will show how useful our public computers are. We will soon be installing a large screen display in our lobby to display a PowerPoint slideshow with our LabMaps embedded, to allow patrons to know where to go to find an available computer.

Computer Lab Solutions is one of the best vendors that we have dealt with. The support is always quick and helpful (chat is great) and the products always work as they should. For the two small issues we had, support was helpful and quickly provided us with an updated installation package from the developers. Other companies might take months to get a new installation package if there is a problem. In addition to good support on existing products, each new release of the software includes new and useful additional features.

Frank Wolz
Computer Systems Administrator
Wright State University