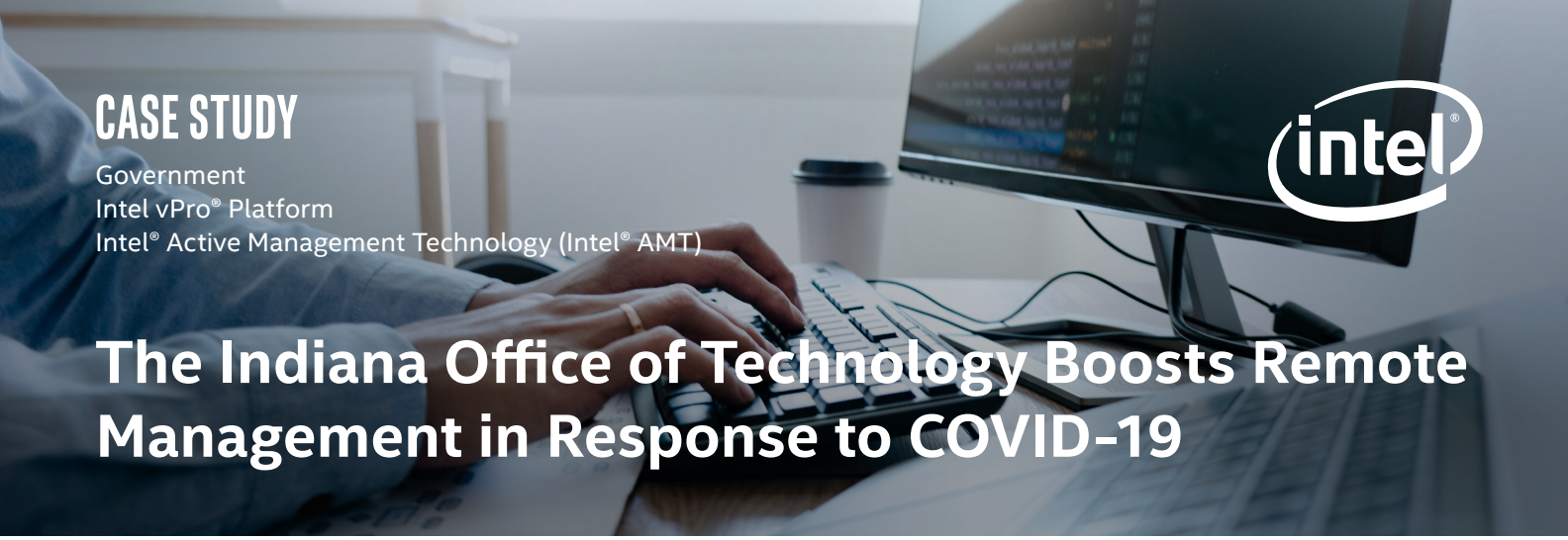

CASE STUDY

Government
Intel vPro® Platform
Intel® Active Management Technology (Intel® AMT)

The Indiana Office of Technology Boosts Remote Management in Response to COVID-19

The Indiana Office of Technology enhances device oversight with Intel® Active Management Technology (Intel® AMT)

"Intel AMT as a concept for the enterprise is invaluable. My ticket count has gone down exponentially."

—David Jones, Indiana Office of Technology, systems administrator

The challenge

The Indiana Office of Technology is tasked with serving a population of 6.7 million spread over a geographic area of some 36,418 square miles (94,320 km2), making the state the 38th largest by area and the 17th most populous in the US. The state government is tasked with addressing a wide range of institutional and public functions and needs.

Early in 2020, as the coronavirus reached the US, the State of Indiana found itself confronted with an operational and communications challenge unlike any it had ever experienced before. The Indiana Office of Technology understood that it would need new strategies and tools if it was to ensure that its vast network of desktops and laptops across the state continued to operate properly for remote workers.

For the team at the Indiana Office of Technology, that meant rethinking the process and methods for quickly addressing and remediating issues in the 36,000 computer systems in use in agencies statewide. Operating as basically a device-as-a-service agency, the office provides all the workstations for machines and hosts a data center in which many of the agency applications are managed.

With state employees working from home, it was necessary to alleviate any need that they return to the office to address a technical issue. To identify and implement a solution, and do so quickly, Indiana commissioned the aid of long-time technology partner, Intel.

The solution

Together, Intel and the Indiana Office of Technology met daily to devise an accelerated timeline for a response. The state had already deployed the Intel® vPro™ platform in its device fleet. Now it decided to capitalize on the power of the platform's Intel® Active Management Technology (Intel® AMT) for its out-of-band remote management capability, a feature that the state had to this point struggled to implement.

Enabling Intel AMT was undertaken quickly and efficiently, managed by the Intel AMT activation team. As part of the process, Intel and the Indiana Office of Technology leveraged the Intel® MeshCommander tool. This application equipped the team to make hardware configuration easy over the Internet, a key requirement of IT's response during the travel restrictions brought on by COVID 19.

The Indiana Office of Technology achieved approximately **18,000** installations of Intel AMT in one month.[1]

The Intel vPro platform with Intel AMT allowed the Indianapolis-based Indiana Office of Technology IT team to remotely manage the large fleet of systems across the state, some in isolated locations. The solution provided a comprehensive PC foundation that offered the performance, security, manageability, and stability the Indiana Office of Technology needed to meet the operational demands brought on by the pandemic and beyond.

For example, the team collaborated with Indiana's Department of Workforce Development to adapt to changing policies and protocols. With Intel's help, a new virtual desktop environment was quickly spun up for the department to better support its needs, including those in its call center. The move helped resolve the difficulty the department's remote staff had been encountering when trying to remotely shut off their machines.

Intel activation experts guided and supported the Indiana Office of Technology each step of the way as it evaluated technology options and ultimately executed the rapid activation of Intel AMT within the state's large and dispersed device fleet.

The Results

Since launching Intel AMT within the Intel vPro platform the Indiana Office of Technology has seen improved out-of-band device management for its network of tens of thousands of users located at numerous sites across the state. The Indiana Office of Technology activation team has so far provisioned approximately 18,000 systems. The new technology has enabled the state to reduce maintenance calls and fuel use, cut response times, and streamline system troubleshooting and repair—without driving up costs.

Remote management capabilities will remain critical in the post-COVID 19 world as well. The state expects that a range of government agencies will encourage large portions of their workforces to continue to work remotely for the foreseeable future.

In addition to helping with current device management needs, the Intel vPro platform with Intel AMT also provides long-term support as the State of Indiana's field technology fleet begins to age out. As a result, the state looks forward to the Intel technology solution delivering additional cost and time savings going forward.

The technology

Intel vPro platform with Intel AMT

The Intel vPro platform is an integrated technology that delivers the latest PC technologies in one validated solution. The platform features the latest Intel® Core™ vPro® and Intel® Xeon® processors, regularly updates its specification to promote continuous innovation, and offers optimized architectures for desktop and mobile. The goal with each generational release is to build in the performance headroom for workflows and continue to support a range of form factors.

Comprised of a superset of underlying products and technologies, the platform offers unique capabilities for computing. The Intel vPro platform is designed for managed IT environments in which an organization like the Indiana Office of Technology seeks to oversee policies across its computing infrastructure, from enabling security services to device provisioning.

By combining business-class performance, hardware-enhanced security, modern remote manageability, and PC fleet stability, the Indiana Office of Technology can transform its computing endpoints into better trusted and well-maintained productivity tools.

1. Performance

The Indiana Office of Technology requires responsive computing systems able to keep up with the heightened pace of work. The Intel vPro platform can combine the top end of Intel's processor product line with high speed wired and wireless networking, Thunderbolt™ 3 I/O, Intel® SSD drives, and Intel® Optane™ memory for fast data access

2. Remote manageability

The Intel vPro platform includes Intel AMT for efficient proactive and reactive maintenance of computing endpoints. Intel AMT helps the State of Indiana keep up with the rate of technology change, including the software patches often necessary at all layers in the stack. This critical manageability tool provides full OS-independent remote control of endpoints over wired or wireless connections, enabling wake and patch, system reimaging and recovery, and other popular use cases.

For the IT team in Indianapolis, Intel AMT contributes to lower costs by reducing onsite repairs, increasing computing uptime, reducing disruption caused by updates, and enabling IT to reach distributed workforces and devices. With features to remotely discover, repair, and help protect networked computing assets, Intel AMT allows IT Ops to support a mobile workforce.

3. Security

The Intel vPro platform's built-in, hardware-enhanced security features provide a more secure platform foundation, coupled with remote recovery capabilities. All layers in the computing stack are addressed. Its Intel® Hardware Shield feature provides protections against attacks below the OS and advanced threat detection capabilities for increased platform security. It also helps reduce the attack surface to protect against damaging firmware-level attacks, while offloading routine security functions for lower user impact and continued productivity.

4. Stability

The Intel vPro platform provides the State of Indiana the stability and reliability of a true business-class device. The platform's Intel® Stable IT Platform Program (Intel® SIPP) provides platform validation that aims for zero hardware changes throughout the buying cycle, for at least 15 months or until the next generational release. This helps a business avoid network or software compatibility problems that may arise when deploying less stable computing infrastructure.

Intel MeshCommander

Intel Mesh Commander is a web-based remote management interface for using Intel AMT. In an effort to make Intel AMT easier and ensure it supports many platforms and over-the-Internet usages, MeshCommander is entirely built in JavaScript.

The technology enables users to manage their Intel AMT computers from within a browser, opening up a range of new possibilities while making it significantly easier to take advantage of hardware management provided by Intel vPro. MeshCommander can also be used as a standalone tool. It is primarily employed for peer-to-peer remote management of devices.

1. Your costs or results may vary.