

From pockets of devices to a unified learning platform

Plum Borough School District

PLUM, PENNSYLVANIA

Weeding out the wrong technology

As a school district just outside of Pittsburgh, PA, Plum Borough understands the importance of technology in the classroom. That's why they offered their students a mixed bag of devices to see which was the best fit. With pockets of Chromebooks, PCs, Mac and iPad spread throughout the district, IT had their hands full trying to manage each platform and provide a consistent learning experience for their K-12 students and teachers.

Plum Borough soon realized this way of conducting business couldn't last, so they sided with the platform that gave students the best opportunity to succeed—Apple. They chose to rollout a 300 device, 1-to-1 iPad program to its elementary schools first, due in large part to the iPad's ease of use and the ability for the students to simply pick up the device and go.

“That's a real testament to Apple and how they've made their devices; make it functional just out of the box,” said Ryan Milliron, lead computer technician at Plum Borough.

Chris Burkey, Plum Borough's director of educational technology, adds that the simple user interface really sets iPad apart. “Even if you've never seen the device, you can pick it up and within two minutes be doing whatever the task is for the day. And, this has significantly changed how teachers are able to instruct in the classroom.”

AT A GLANCE



K-12 school district outside of Pittsburgh, PA



Turned to Apple and Jamf Pro to provide a consistent learning experience



Made up of seven public schools consisting of 3,965 students



Previously relied on a variety of learning technology platforms and management solutions



Deployed 1-to-1 iPad program to 300 elementary students



Rolling out 1-to-1 iPad program for middle school students next school year



PUTTING LEARNING TOOLS IN STUDENT HANDS

With Apple firmly cemented as the preferred choice for Plum Borough, the next decision was how to get these devices into the hands of teachers and students. Plum Borough's IT staff was currently using a smattering of mobile device management (MDM) solutions—with little to no success due to the lack of functionality—so when the decision to implement a 1-to-1 program was made, they knew they needed a better tool to help them get the most out of their Apple investment.

Plum Borough's elementary schools consist of four buildings, so to avoid the headache of driving to each building and physically touching each device to manually set them up, the tool they purchased needed to give them the ability to centrally manage their devices.

Through their own due diligence and some high recommendations, Jamf Pro from Jamf was purchased. And, according to Plum Borough, has made all the difference.

“This initiative wouldn't have been possible without utilizing Jamf,” Milliron said. “I would have been working 80-hour weeks, pulling my hair out.”

With Jamf Pro in place, Plum Borough was able to easily deploy their devices and provide students with the learning resources they needed immediately upon unwrapping their iPads.



LIFE WITH THE RIGHT PLATFORM, RIGHT SOLUTION

Through the power of a single management tool built exclusively for Apple, Plum Borough has not only significantly simplified their device deployment process, but also streamlined their daily management operations.

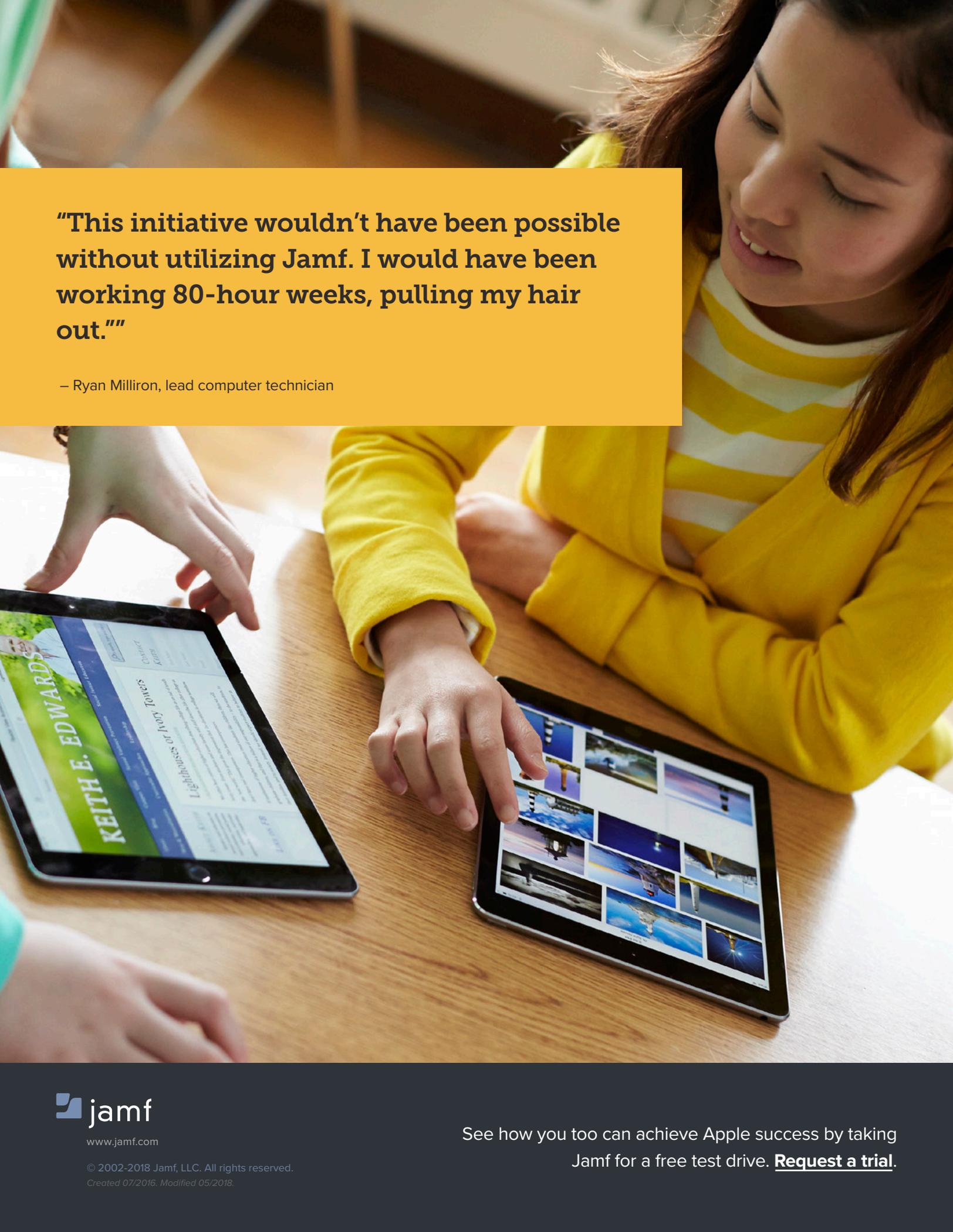
“We would field at least a dozen calls a day on software updates or printer requests, but those calls have almost completely gone away,” boasts Burkey. He adds that the random calls they do receive, they simply ask the user if they’ve checked Self Service—an internal app catalog where Plum Borough places school-approved software, settings, and updates—and the call ends shortly after that.

Forgotten password requests from teachers are also becoming a thing of the past, as Plum Borough tied each device to a teacher’s Apple ID. Teachers now have more ownership of their device and are able to quickly reset a forgotten Apple ID on their own and continue with the lesson.

Implementing Jamf Pro has “freed up our time significantly to be able to handle more pressing issues. We actually look at things that need to be researched and planned, such as system updates, instead of responding to the simple calls that take way too much time,” said Burkey.

With the elementary schools now learning and succeeding with iPad, Plum Borough is turning its attention to the middle schools. Jamf Pro will soon help them deploy 720 iPad devices as part of a 1-to-1 program for grades 6-8.



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a yellow and white striped shirt, is looking down at a tablet. The background is a blurred office setting.

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– Ryan Milliron, lead computer technician



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