

Cutting Costs, Not Corners: The Masters School's Smart Move to Scale Computing™

Challenge

IT departments at nearly every educational institution face a common challenge—how to do more with less.

Budgets are tight; licenses, hardware, power, and the staff's time all add up quickly, and technology is changing faster than ever.

When Broadcom acquired VMware and prices spiked, The Masters School, a private school near New York City, had no choice: they had to find a smarter, more affordable path.

"We had been using VMware for close to two decades," says Bhavin Patel, Director of Technology at The Masters School.

"The immediate need to move off VMware came from the surge in pricing. It was so astronomical that small institutions like us who relied on VMware were no longer able to afford it."

Nearly 700 students and 250 staff at the school depend on technology every day. With 180 students living on campus, the network must work around the clock.

"We have people on campus 24/7/365," Bhavin says. "Our virtual infrastructure is a huge piece of our core infrastructure. It must be up to date, stable, and reliable."

Solution

When The Master's School realized they needed an immediate alternative to VMware, they phoned their longtime partner Vandis.

"We contacted Vandis to help us find the right solution," Bhavin says. "Ryan Young and his team suggested Scale Computing. As we did our research, we determined it was a great fit."

"The Masters School wasn't using VMware's advanced features," explains Ryan Young, Vandis' CTO. "Rather than getting stuck with VMware's bloated bundles, Scale Computing's affordable, hyperconverged platform with its simplicity and efficiency—checked all the boxes."

After a single demo, the path forward was clear. "During the demo, the Scale team showed how well the platform fit our school—and it clicked," Bhavin says. "They arrived with a clear migration plan, understood our setup and mapped a solution for the next five to eight years."



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Bhavin Patel
Director of Technology
The Masters School

Industry
Education

Location
Dobbs Ferry, New York

Technology Solution
SC//Platform™ Edge Computing
solution

Partners



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A looming VMware license expiration triggered a race against the clock. “Scale Computing moved heaven and earth to ensure the hardware arrived in time,” Ryan recalls. “They first said a month, then came back and said seven days.”

Vandis and The Masters School had three weeks from delivery to full production.

“Week one we installed and synced the cluster,” Ryan says. “Then we had six business days for migration, including decommissioning unused hosts and modernizing the infrastructure. It wasn’t lift-and-shift; it was optimize-and-right-size.”

“We activated everything two days before our VMware licenses expired,” Bhavin says. “Then we got a cease-and-desist letter. I was grateful we’d already cut over—and thought about other smaller schools like us that were stuck.”

Results

From day one, the improvements were unmistakable.

“Server response times went through the roof—in the good way,” Ryan says. “DNS, DHCP, Active Directory—those microsecond gains add up.”

“I cut out about 60% of my hardware and rack space,” Bhavin says. “That saves money on power and HVAC ventilation. And for the next refresh, I’m replacing three pieces of hardware instead of a SAN and shelves plus hosts. Management is super easy. After a 10-minute training, our sysadmin was deploying VMs confidently.”

This reduction in rack space allowed The Masters School to move their virtual environment into their fiber core, further slashing latency. Scale Computing’s hyperconverged stack collapsed a SAN-centric design into three 1U nodes.

Cost predictability—after a year of financial surprises—was crucial.

“Schools budget year to year,” Bhavin says. “Scale Computing is predictable and affordable once you know the cost. VMware hit us with a sudden price hike and wouldn’t budge. Scale Computing and Vandis helped us reach a price The Masters School could manage—and made future costs transparent. We chose a solution we could scale for the next five to eight years.”

The Masters School currently runs its VMs on the SC//Platform™ Edge Computing solution, supporting student-facing and core services such as terminal servers, print management, financial systems, and much of the network core.

Bhavin reflects on Vandis’ role as, “Vital, critical, and every other synonym that goes with that. They understand the industry, what we can and can’t afford, and how to implement so we see ROI. They make me a better Director of Technology.”

From Vandis’ perspective, Ryan says, “We’re not successful unless our customers are successful. With Scale Computing, we deliver performance, redundancy, and predictability. Honestly, it was the easiest hypervisor deployment I’ve ever done.”

In the end, a budget shock became an infrastructure upgrade—faster, simpler, and built for a campus that never sleeps.

“Even if I didn’t have to move off VMware,” Bhavin concludes, “I would have moved—given Scale Computing’s pricing and lack of technical debt. After going through this with Vandis and Scale Computing, I’m much happier with this environment.”