



● NETWORK TUITION

# NetSupport School 8

PRICE 25 users, £705 exc VAT

UPGRADE Depends on original date of purchase

SUPPLIER NetSupport Software 01778 382270

INTERNET www.netsupportschool.com

VERDICT Without doubt one of the slickest, most cost-effective teaching software products available, and this latest version adds even more useful features.

Although mainly used for network support, remote-control software is also an ideal tool for deploying distance-learning facilities and few, if any, do this better than NetSupport School (NSS). Based on the excellent NetSupport Manager remote-control software, NSS has been fine-tuned to provide a superb range of tools allowing teachers and trainers alike to deliver classes or training sessions to any number of students. NSS 7 (see issue 107, p171) was impressive enough to garner a well-deserved PC Pro Recommended award, and this latest version brings in even more new and useful features.

Along with a student registration facility, NSS 8 delivers alerting messages for pupils, automated lesson plans and even more wizards. It's simple enough to use, as it comprises a Tutor management component and a Student utility that's loaded on all PCs. Installation doesn't get much easier either, as the Tutor takes a few minutes to load, while student deployment is aided by a tool that scans workgroups, domains and IP subnets, and compiles lists of available systems along with details of the installed OS.

On first contact, the Tutor scans the network and populates its main window



NSS 8 lets you keep a close eye on all students, monitor test progress and keep Internet access under control.

with icons for each discovered Student system. A complete interface redesign makes it even easier to use, and the Student icons can be moved around to represent each PC's physical location in the classroom. The Registration tool presents each student with a form that requires details such as their surname, class and ID number. This information is attached to the relevant icons, so you can easily see where your pupils are located. You can also see what each student is doing from the Monitor screen. This shows thumbnails of their screen, which can be updated as often as every five seconds.

Test creation is helped along by plenty of new wizards. You can incorporate video,

text, pictures and sound file links in each question. The Test Designer module sees even more improvements, as it now allows you to automate a complete sequence of events. You could, for example, check that all students are present, lock each keyboard and mouse, display an introduction and instructions, unlock the PC and then begin a test. The test can be started and stopped with a single mouse click, and a status screen provides a complete readout on how each student is progressing through the questions.

You have complete control over what the students can do on their PCs. The application and web-control modules are able to restrict access to selected applications and the Internet. At any time, it's possible to see what applications are running and which is currently active. You can then select one and add it to either approved or restricted lists.

Internet access gets the same treatment. You can see which websites are being visited and revoke all Internet access to the entire class. You could even include this command as part of a test plan. NSS 8 allows restrictions to be applied to individual students as well. Remote-control tools need no introduction, as these are based on NetSupport Manager, which is one of the top-performing products on the market.

NSS 8 offers some of the best lesson- and examination-automation tools. Along with its simple deployment and intuitive Tutor interface, this could easily make it the teacher's pet.

DAVE MITCHELL

PC PRO RATINGS	
EASE OF USE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★
REQUIREMENTS Windows 98 onwards.	