

MSL Report (April 2009): Software Review – Faronics Power Save

Do you manage a large network? Do you want to save a bundle of money? Have you introduced software that will keep tabs on each computer on your network and put idle computers into a lower state of energy consumption? The question of wanting to save money is, of course, rhetorical – who doesn't want to save money, especially in an economic climate where frugal spending is a must? I don't think, however – and I hope I'm wrong! – that everyone managing a network, whether small or large, has considered and is pursuing software that would handle the task of managing energy costs while providing a return of investment in a relatively short period of time. All educational institutions need to make it a matter of high priority to outfit networked computers with software that reduces power consumption by introducing software like [Faronics Power Save](#).

Faronics Power Save comes with some impressive features, hence the moniker, "intelligent power management". Typical computers with an average monitor consume between 95-650 watts of power and if you run a large network you can well imagine how many kilowatt hours (kilowatt hour = unit of electric energy equal to the work done by one kilowatt acting for one hour) are wasted because a computer sits idle for periods of time without being used. Faronics has come up with Power Save to do just that – save power, and in turn save money, while reducing the carbon footprint. What's not to like here? Save the environment and save money at the same time – good news, and definitely worth the investment simply because it will pay for itself over a short period of time. And there are special prices for educational institutions as well.

Faronics Power Save probes each computer's CPU, disk and peripheral devices, as well as software application activity to determine if it needs to take action. This is a wonderful feature, especially in classroom contexts where power saving features often interrupts teaching by powering down computers while a lesson is being taught, or while an educator is delivering instructions. I know that my district's current power management solutions have become a nuisance simply because computers are going into a deep sleep mode and are often difficult to wake. In fact, the Ministry of Education's licensed lab management software will not wake these computers because it doesn't recognize that the computers are in an "on" state. Frustrating, to say the least! Network managers and administrators can control which critical programs inhibit Power Save from powering down a computer so that tasks that are important are not interrupted. And Power Save will recognize particular pieces of software that are running at the local level so that power saving features are not employed. For example, if applications such as presentation programs are running, the presentation is not interrupted simply because the computer is sitting idle for a certain period of time.

An extremely important feature of Faronics Power Save is the ability to generate reports on power consumption and savings. Based on these reports, network managers can determine if a particular mode of implementation is effective or ineffective and then make quick changes if necessary, deploying these changes quickly and efficiently across the network. You even have the ability to calculate projected savings based on an audit period – effective for long term estimating and budgeting. These features are definitely desirable.

The relatively manageable size of the software package will make the pushing of this software over a network relatively easy. Once installed, with some tweaking, the Power Saver can begin the task of lowering power consumption, and saving energy and money. This software is ready for both the Windows and Macintosh platforms.

I give Faronics Power Save a gold medal for its “green” footprint! After having experienced some less than stellar performers in the past, I would have to say that Faronic’s reputation as a company who means business, especially green business, is worth the investment in Power Save. In a time when we need to be good stewards of our capital and our energy, then Faronics Power Save is a choice that makes good sense!

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