Lab Support: A Computer Laboratory Class Management Support System

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Abstract : Getting the attention of students is a constant challenge to the instructors/lecturers. Although in the computer laboratories some networking and entertainment websites are blocked, yet, these websites have unlimited ways of attracting students to get into it. Thus, when an instructor gives a specific set of instructions, some students may not be able to follow sequentially the steps that are given. The instructor has to physically go to the specific remote terminal and show the student the details. Sometimes, during an examination in laboratory set-up, a proctor may prefer to give detailed and text-written instructions rather than verbal instructions. Even the mere calling of a specific student at any time will distract the whole class especially when activities are being performed. What is needed is : An application software that is able to lock the student's monitor and at the same time display the instructor's screen; a software that is powerful enough to process in its side alone and manipulate a specific user's terminal in terms of free configuration that is, without restrictions at the server level is a required functionality for a modern and optimal server structure; a software that is able to send text messages to students, per terminal or in group will be a solution. These features are found in LabSupport. This paper outlines the LabSupport application software framework to efficiently manage computer laboratory sessions and will include different modules: screen viewer, demonstration mode, monitor locking system, text messaging, and class management. This paper's ultimate aim is to provide a system that increases instructor productivity.
Keywords : application software, broadcast messaging, class management, locking system
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