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AN innovative system that could save schools and colleges cash when investing in IT has been unveiled by a Nottingham company.

Technology firm Custard Technical Services Ltd is the only company in the area to install and sell SoftXpand software – which allows six users to work on one PC at the same time.

Bosses at the Annesley-based firm are planning to showcase the product to every school in Nottinghamshire to highlight the massive savings that can be made by using the technology.

The system allows six people to use their own workstation – which includes a monitor, keyboard and mouse – but uses only one PC.

And according to Custard's (position) Mark Stevenson, users will not be able to tell the difference, because of the power capacity available in modern PCs.

He said: "One PC's power can serve multiple users as only ten per cent of a PC's power is normally used.

"Rather than each user having their own expensive, energy-consuming PC sitting idly under their desk, SoftXpand allows one PC to be shared by six classmates or colleagues operating exactly the same way as six PCs would, but with added efficiency."

The way in which SoftXpand works means schools and other organisations with tight budgets will be able to save large sums of cash.

Mark added: "This solves the problems that schools, volunteer organisations, internet cafes and youth centres have, which is a limited IT budget and rising electricity costs.

“SoftXpand also helps reduce the effects of climate change. As six workstations run from just one tower, there are huge savings on IT, air-conditioning, landfill, electricity, cabling and other costs.

Custard has already installed the revolutionary system into Hope Primary School in Derbyshire, and it is quickly seeing benefits.

Headteacher Sam Fisher said: “We would recommend people do look at this system as we have seen huge benefits in such a short amount of time.”

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce has already backed the system

ICT Director Scott Knowles said: “This is the best IT innovation I have seen for over two years.”

For more information about SoftXpand, contact Custard on 0800 980 4420 or visit www.custardcomputers.com.