

Case Study: *Southwestern University*

HOW TO BETTER Allocate Resources




A P O G E E

It came down to how to better allocate resources

When Southwestern University first deployed its ResNet infrastructure in the mid-1990s, the school's Information Technology Services department allowed access to academic resources and information on the campus network and on the Internet. Students were able to access email services and surf the limited, information-based Internet available at the time. As online multimedia content became increasingly more prevalent, Southwestern students quickly found new uses for the network, such as downloading rich media, audio and video, and exchanging large files through peer-to-peer file sharing networks.

The impact on bandwidth availability and the constant administrative pressure to stay ahead of the newest technology and services began to draw increasingly larger amounts of time and resources from staff and diverted focus away from support services and application development.

"The natural question was, were we focusing on our core strategic mission for the University to support academics and research, or were we simply being an Internet service provider for students?" said Bob Paver, Southwestern CIO.

Ultimately, Southwestern decided that partnering for ResNet services would resolve these mounting ResNet challenges and selected Apogee to manage the student network based on the company's proven track record and exclusive focus on higher education. Working closely with the University, Apogee developed a custom network solution that would respond directly to the unique needs of the residential campus.

Redeployment

Apogee's initial steps were to implement critical hardware upgrades to the ResNet and facilitate additional bandwidth expansion. The existing network infrastructure was completely replaced at no cost to the University and included a full-scale deployment of new Cisco core routing and switching equipment. Hubs in the dormitories were also replaced with new 10/100 switches, while building links were upgraded from 10/1000 Mbps.

Upgrades Made Easy

In addition to the hardware upgrades, Apogee provided move-in and connectivity support directly to students on campus and with toll-free phone support available through the 24-hour Student Support center. While in previous years, campus Housing and offices had been overloaded with support needs during the busy move-in season, once Apogee became the first line of support for network issues and student connectivity problems, calls to the campus help desk were dramatically reduced and University administrators were finally able to focus on other ways to facilitate the move-in process.

Student & University Satisfaction: The Real Test

"I haven't had to look at the bandwidth and data traffic flows since the project came online," said Todd Watson, Senior Network Administrator "I've already had enough time to implement a long awaited systems project that normally would have been delayed with the start of the semesters and the related student network issues. And no network reconfiguration was required when the students returned from the summer break, which was a first since the release of Napster in 1999."

Student residents were equally satisfied. "Dealing with Apogee is quick and painless and the network is significantly faster than it was before," said Breisen Miller, a Southwestern Junior majoring in English and History, speaking to the student newspaper, The Megaphone. Added Junior Sean O'Neil, "My only complaint is that it didn't happen sooner."