

CASE STUDY

FUTURE-PROOFING WI-FI TO ELEVATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

At Ithaca College, a mid-size liberal arts college in Ithaca, New York, you'll find a world-class Wi-Fi network used by students, teachers and guests for everything, everywhere. But it wasn't always like this. More than 14+ years ago, Ithaca made a strategic decision to outsource and partnered with Apogee to pave a progressive path for technology. Apogee was selected for its standout experience in the academic market and knowledge of piracy laws. In just over four months, Apogee and Ithaca achieved the goals they had set out to accomplish. This partnership continues to thrive today and has positively impacted student satisfaction, productivity and the bottom line.

"IT and facilities planning are now inextricably linked. Sometimes a specialist provider in these domains should be brought in when they bring true value, in addition to positively impacting productivity and the bottom line. I want a partner that works alongside Ithaca to bring innovative ideas; one that takes the time to think through how to improve, and helps the school meet and anticipate student needs. Apogee is such a partner."

-Gerald Hector, former VP, Finance & Administration,
Ithaca College

GOALS

In the '90s, Ithaca had established an in-house residential network. But by the early 2000s, the school was struggling to meet student needs from accelerated device adoption, growing expectations of campus-wide network access, and legal issues with peer- to-peer sharing. Ithaca decided that outsourcing to a third-party to improve service and support would be a better use of their resources, routing Information Technology Services (ITS) to strategic priorities.

CHALLENGES

- Updating an in-house ResNet to better service their 54 residence halls and 4,400 connections
- Meet student expectations at the pace of students' accelerated device adoption.
- Address issues regarding growing peer-to-peer sharing and copyright holder complaints.
- After being hit by the 2003 Blaster virus, which brought down the campus network, Ithaca needed to protect against future virus attacks.

SOLUTIONS

Apogee's tailored solution for Ithaca included:

- Create a tiered service internet connection plan including a no-cost option for students.
- On-site technical support and round-the-clock phone support for all students on campus.
- Increased bandwidth that scales as technologies advance and the college expands, plus back-up bandwidth circuit for additional redundancy.
- Creation of a network architecture protected from viruses, worms and Trojans.
- Solving the issues of appropriate use and legal compliance on the ResNet.
- Expanded seamless and reliable wireless coverage to 29 academic, student-centered, and administrative spaces across campus.
- Upgraded switches, cabling, and infrastructure, creating a more robust Wi-Fi experience.

RESULTS

Through its partnership with Apogee, Ithaca fostered an understanding of where the industry is going, as well as how technology advancements impact student life and learning. Today, Ithaca now enjoys:

- Stable, predictable costs
- Greater efficiency
- Data-driven decision making
- Risk assessment Process automation
- Tools to prevent human error