



Mount Mercy Upgrades Network Infrastructure

For better performance and greater reliability

The Organization

Mount Mercy was founded in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1928 by the Sisters of Mercy as a two-year college for women. Mount Mercy became a four-year institution in 1957. The University has always been committed to professional development and instruction in business and education, and has expanded with curricula in nursing and social work. The university has almost 1,800 students and maintains a 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio.

The Challenge

As a relatively small educational institution with limited resources, Mount Mercy University had an aging network infrastructure that could no longer support 2,000 users across two separate campuses. The campus joke used to be that it was a good day when the network didn't go down.

Only one on-staff IT professional was familiar with the network infrastructure, which made maintenance challenging. It also posed a risk; if that one employee left, no one would be available who understood the network systems.

Once the interim university president understood the scope of the problem and the potential risks, the administration decided to initiate a network upgrade, including hardware, software and overall infrastructure. They also determined they needed to outsource network services and OneNeck® IT Solutions had the right credentials and offered the breadth of services and capabilities to assume responsibility for the campus network refresh.

The OneNeck IT Solutions Answer

The upgrade project was broken down into basic components to assess the requirements for the university's network, identify components that needed to be outsourced and review software assets to ensure that all licenses were up to date.

Scope of Infrastructure Upgrade

The university IT professionals understood that a network upgrade wasn't a small undertaking and they would need a long-term partnership with a vendor that could address their immediate requirements and be available for support once the systems upgrade was complete. After interviewing a number of area vendors, they chose OneNeck.

From the beginning, OneNeck's team assessed the current infrastructure to identify weaknesses and where and how to upgrade the existing network. While many of the pieces were already in place, the university needed help understanding the end-to-end network infrastructure, how to connect specific parts of the network and where to upgrade and optimize systems as needed. The OneNeck team helped with upgrading data storage capacity, software, cabling and the wireless network infrastructure.



Mount Mercy Summary

Organization	University
Industry	Higher Education
Business Challenges	Aging network infrastructure Lack of sufficient in-house resources In need of colocation partner for disaster recovery Maintenance renewal tracking assistance
User Environment	1800+ Students 1 main campus / 1 satellite campus Online courses available
Technical Environment	Core Network: (4) Cisco 4500X Cisco 5508 WLC Cisco 2960 Switches Cisco 5500 Controllers Cisco 3750X's running VMware environment in a OneNeck data center

Colocation and Disaster Recovery

Once the campus network itself has been upgraded to improve performance and reliability, Mount Mercy realized it also needed to upgrade its disaster recovery (DR) solution. The main network is located on campus but the backup servers were situated at the Graduate Center located in another part of the city. The university wanted a more secure, reliable backup and DR solution.

OneNeck helped Mount Mercy create a more comprehensive DR strategy, hosting the data at the OneNeck facility in Cedar Falls. The OneNeck team helped develop a migration strategy to move systems backup and recovery to the OneNeck data center. Migration was simple and trouble-free and the campus now has peace of mind a reliable DR solution.

"We made the right choice," said Connie Snitker, Director of Technology Operations for Mount Mercy. "In project planning and implementation, from start to finish, OneNeck was amazing. They always ask the questions that we would have never thought to ask, and the follow up afterwards is so thorough. We absolutely made the right choice to go with OneNeck."

Software License Renewals

An ongoing challenge for the Mount Mercy University IT team is software maintenance. With OneNeck's help, all software licenses for network services such as Veeam, VMware and SonicWall are now managed by OneNeck. The university now has one resource for all its software renewal and ordering needs.

The Benefits

By using OneNeck's IT expertise and colocation services, Mount Mercy University has been able to improve its network to deliver greater reliability and performance to promote greater productivity. The university also has a more reliable DR solution, and is ensured that its software licenses remain current.

Most importantly, Mount Mercy University has a world-class IT partner who can provide whatever enterprise networking support may be needed in the future. As the university's IT needs continue to evolve, OneNeck provides a single point of contact that is ready to assist.

About OneNeck IT Solutions

OneNeck IT Solutions LLC offers hybrid IT solutions including cloud and hosting solutions, managed services, enterprise application management, advanced IT services, IT hardware and top-tier data centers in Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon and Wisconsin. OneNeck's team of technology professionals manage secure, world-class, hybrid IT infrastructures and applications for businesses around the country.

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