Florida State University Relies on Sprint for Day-to-Day Management of its Campus Voice System

Challenge
Sprint and Florida State University (FSU) began their relationship in the 1970s when the university procured 7,200 Centrex phone lines for its campus in Tallahassee. Since that time, the university has grown and so has its voice needs.

In an ongoing effort to provide FSU with the best possible service and support, Sprint has implemented a number of customized solutions over the years. The university now has about 13,000 phone lines and 5,000 mailboxes.

Solution
Sprint installed a telco-grade central office switch on the campus in 1988. All calls to and from the outside world are routed through this switch. This arrangement allows the university to reduce overall costs, compared with owning its own PBX, and gives the FSU Office of Telecommunications (OTC) more control over changes and additions to its phone system. For example, it takes the OTC as much as 80 percent less time to install new lines with the on-site central office than it did when the central office and technicians were located off site.

In addition, the upgrade provides an opportunity for the university to cost-effectively outsource the services of technical experts. Two dedicated Sprint technicians work on site as part of the contract.

Having an on-site technician from Sprint allows for more prompt handling of repairs. The OTC also saves time by having Sprint provide the university with end-to-end network troubleshooting and problem resolution. In fact, the university has experienced no downtime with its voice systems in more than eight years.

Enhancing safety and security on campus
In 1999, OTC officials began working with Sprint to implement a 311 service that allows students to report non-life threatening situations to campus police. As the first service of its kind offered by Sprint, the team spent several months planning the implementation. They also conducted a public awareness campaign.

Florida State University

Florida State University takes pride in providing superior academic opportunities to its student body of more than 36,000. Its faculty of more than 1,800 includes five Nobel laureates, 10 National Academy of Sciences members and 12 American Academy of Arts and Sciences fellows. In 1994, the university was designated a “Research 1” university by the Carnegie Foundation, placing it in an elite group of the nation’s top research institutions.

Although the main campus of the university is located in Tallahassee, FSU also offers degree programs in Panama City, Fla., and the Republic of Panama.

For more information about Florida State University, visit www.fsu.edu.

One Sprint. Many Solutions."
When someone dials 311, the university’s telephone switch routes the call to the FSU campus police. “The 311 service gives them comfort in knowing they can get immediate help without feeling like they have to wait until the situation becomes an emergency,” said Harvey Buchanan, director of OTC. “Having Sprint technicians on hand to help with the FSU central office switch and our moves, adds and changes has been crucial to our success.”

**Bottom line**
Sprint and the OTC are currently testing voice over IP and exploring the integration of wireless phones with landline services. Faculty and staff could forward their office phone calls to their wireless phones and avoid missing calls. Another initiative is the future implementation of unified messaging. It gives users the convenience of a single repository for voice, fax and text messages.

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“When Sprint technicians on hand to help with the FSU central office switch and our moves, adds and changes has been crucial to our success. These guys run hard and fast to support our OTC technicians and ensure that our most basic services run smoothly.”

— Harvey Buchanan, Director of Office of Telecommunications
Florida State University

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