UMKC selects revolutionary networking service to provide reliable and secure experiences for students and staff.

$2M

Cost per day if the UMKC network goes down

2X

The increase in Wi-Fi coverage for the ultimate user experience at UMKC

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Number of calls to IT support requesting guest network access after Nile

The Challenge:

The IT team at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) strives to provide the most optimal learning experience for students. However, connectivity in one of the school's key buildings was falling short. Aging wireless equipment, combined with the fact that it's one of the older sites on campus, resulted in a Wi-Fi situation that couldn't support the more than 1,000 students, faculty and staff who access the building and rely on its network.

- Underperforming Wi-Fi impacting learning environment
- Network vulnerable to social engineering and ransomware attacks
- IT staff mired in low-level tasks
- Uncertainty surrounding capital expenditures

The Solution

Nile Access Service was the solution to the University's connectivity problems. An extensive, high-definition site survey, included with the service, resulted in the strategic placement of access points and sensors, drastically improving the Wi-Fi experience.

- Nile Access Service deployed to solve connectivity speed and consistency issues
- Entirely new network, supporting 1,000s of users and unique devices, was delivered in less than one week
- 802.1X authentication across wired and wireless devices
- UMKC IT relieved of redundant, tactical tasks

The Results

Nile not only solved UMKC’s wireless problems with always-on connectivity, it strengthened the university’s security posture, freed up scarce IT resources and turned the network into a manageable operational expense.

- Guaranteed wired and wireless connectivity backed by performance-based guarantees, full-site coverage and high-performance capacity
- Campus zero trust isolation protects against social engineering, rogue devices and malware proliferation
- Nile 24/7 support enables IT team to focus on high-level initiatives
- Predictable equipment sourcing and costs

Lightning-fast, reliable Wi-Fi

Andy Goodenow, UMKC CIO, is a big believer in the “as-a-service” model, so when the 1960s-era School of Education, Social Work and Psychological Sciences building struggled with Wi-Fi connectivity, he looked to Nile for a solution. From the initial site survey to the guaranteed network performance Goodenow enjoys today, Nile delivered.

Goodenow reports that before deploying the Nile network, he physically sat in locations throughout the building to test network connectivity.



“The Nile site survey was eye-opening, they ended up recommending we deploy significantly more access points in the building,” he recalls. “When the Nile network was in place, I went back to the exact same spots I sat in before the rollout and the network speed was multiple times faster.”

Having a solid Wi-Fi solution students know they can count on has dramatically improved the experience, including guest network access. It is now a self-service option running over the wireless network that doesn’t require a call to IT support - a boon to today’s modern, phone-call-averse students.

The Nile network is also making day-to-day operations easier for the IT staff which has seen a drop in support calls and fewer incident report tickets since the installation. The automation of software upgrades and security patches frees IT personnel to spend time gaining new skills and focusing on higher-level initiatives and goals.

Zero trust model creates an impenetrable network

Dean of the UMKC School of Sciences and Engineering, Kevin Truman, explains the importance of a secure network environment for protecting the university’s intellectual property and enabling students and faculty to conduct sensitive, sometimes classified, research.

“To do the types of things our students are involved in – state-of-the-art, top-notch research – a network that is completely trustworthy and secure is absolutely essential,” he says.

Built with security as a foundational element, Nile Access Service has built-in, zero trust principles by default. It’s now impossible to just plug in and gain access - every user and every device is authenticated before accessing the network. Zero trust isolation enables UMKC security teams to prevent the proliferation of malware, like ransomware, because traffic flows from the user to the firewall and Nile does not allow for direct peer-to-peer communication.

But, securing network access is only one piece of the puzzle - ensuring the traffic and data on the network are secured is also a top priority for Goodenow. By default, traffic on the Nile network is encrypted from end-to-end, thwarting snooping and sniffing.

From CapEx to OpEx: eliminating unexpected cost & complexity

Goodenow comes from a finance background, giving him a unique perspective not common to most CIOs. The ability to offload the responsibility of lifecycle management allowed Goodenow to save money, deploying his staff in areas where he knew they could excel. Because Nile delivers the network completely as a service, from Day 0 through Day N operations, Goodenow was even more motivated to transition to this opex-based consumption model. Capital expenditures and unexpected costs are taken out of the equation entirely, complex configurations are eliminated with automated software upgrades and security patches, and hardware refreshes save the team time and money.



“The Nile NaaS solution gives us premium Wi-Fi, switches and security that are better than anything we could build ourselves using a standard IT approach,” says Goodenow. “We get an extremely high level of quality backed by service level agreements.”

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