

Rethinking a Campus Network Refresh with NaaS

For decades, campus network refresh decisions have typically followed a predictable path. Commit to the wired, wireless, and security infrastructure and solutions you know, or transition to a new vendor that promises better technology and support. With Campus Network-as-a-Service (NaaS), IT leaders have a third option—a cloud-based model that offloads infrastructure management and routine support tasks to a provider.

As organizations push for digital transformation, agility, and innovation, many are re-evaluating their network strategies, drawn to the financial flexibility of shifting from a CapEx-heavy model to an OpEx-based approach. This shift is already gaining significant traction, with a recent Enterprise Management Associates report revealing that [92% of respondents](#) are interested in adopting campus and branch networks through an as-a-Service model.

As adoption accelerates, organizations are uncovering benefits beyond cost predictability. The challenge? Recognizing the full scope of NaaS advantages beyond the obvious. From boosting agility and operational efficiency to eliminating EOL/EOS headaches and seamlessly supporting office moves, relocations, and closures, let's explore how IT leaders are discovering new opportunities to modernize their networks.

Key Takeaways

Budgetary control

CIOs are under constant pressure to make the network more responsive, agile, and innovative. They, in turn, challenge their Head of IT infrastructure to ensure the organization has the correct tools for the job. It then falls on the Head of IT infrastructure and team to identify and purchase the network that satisfies near and long-term objectives.

Network as a Service Adoption

92% of respondents signaled an interest in adopting campus and branch networks through an as-a-Service model.

– Enterprise Management Associates (EMA) Report

Unfortunately, gaining the necessary budget for a successful campus refresh is more difficult than ever before. While IT teams are expected to deliver continuous improvements, the funding rarely aligns with user and business expectations. As a result:

- Approved budgets often fall short of initial requests
- Critical network capabilities are delayed or deprioritized
- Traditional CapEx models force tough trade-offs

These constraints make it increasingly difficult to refresh a campus network that supports both today's requirements and tomorrow's ambitions.

Instead of driving innovation, new projects become life-support systems for legacy networks that were never designed for AI-driven applications, a hybrid workforce, or today's cloud-heavy environments. The result? Higher operational complexity, unpredictable costs, and a growing gap between business needs and network capabilities.

The IT organization is then forced into using an inefficient mix of old, new, and transitioning infrastructure—with the older equipment being a significant weakness. It's often at End-of-Life/End-of-Service, and not up to the task. It's a tiring dilemma for IT leaders who want to provide the performance, experience, and security their users demand, but it's impossible due to fragile, aging infrastructure.

A Campus NaaS model breaks this painful cycle for IT leaders, shifting network expenses from CapEx to OpEx and turning significant, unpredictable investments into a manageable, predictable budget item. Instead of seeking approval for a \$1.5M–\$5M upfront network refresh—often a tough sell—IT leaders can secure a more attainable annual approval, making long-term network investments easier to justify and sustain.

Improved IT operations efficiency

Inefficiencies in managing a traditional network have always significantly affected IT departments. Refresh cycles for wired switches and access points (APs) rarely align, and in a multi-vendor network, they often overlap or conflict with each other. IT teams spend valuable time managing hardware upgrades, software updates, and licensing compliance—all while navigating complex vendor pricing structures. This ongoing cycle adds cost, complexity, and operational strain, diverting resources from strategic initiatives.

With Campus NaaS, the provider handles all hardware and software upgrades, maintenance, and support. AI-driven automation further minimizes operational overhead by streamlining network design, deployment, monitoring, management, and security.

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IT leaders are recognizing that offloading network operations to Campus NaaS providers not only increases efficiency but also allows their teams to focus on innovation, growth initiatives, and accelerating time to value.

A Smarter Approach to Network Expansion and Lifecycle Management

For IT leaders, Campus NaaS removes the burden of managing end-of-life (EOL) and end-of-support (EOS) cycles—an ongoing concern that adds complexity and cost to network operations. With a Campus NaaS model, network infrastructure is continuously maintained, upgraded, and managed, ensuring the organization is never constrained by aging hardware or expiring licenses.

This also extends to scaling operations. Whether adding capacity, opening new locations, or relocating offices, traditional network management can introduce delays—from procurement and compatibility checks to physically moving and reinstalling equipment. With Campus NaaS, these challenges disappear. There's no need to decommission, resell, or transport hardware. Network infrastructure is deployed, configured, and managed by the provider, with most functions handled in the cloud.

The Nile Campus NAAS Advantage

As the head of infrastructure evaluates wired and wireless options for campus and branch networks, shifting beyond the traditional model is essential. A modern approach provides greater budgetary control, operational efficiency, and productivity gains—making it clear that maintaining the status quo is no longer a viable strategy.

Choosing the right campus network refresh strategy is essential to ensuring network performance, security, and compatibility with today's advanced technology requirements. Nile's Autonomous Networking model proactively prevents major outages and mitigates costly downtime that allows IT leaders to quickly modernize their networks and:

- Realize greater budgetary control via a structured OpEx model
- Save on operational expenses due to increased operational efficiencies
- Eliminate costly EOL/EOS contracts and support
- Effectively support office moves, relocations, and closures

Nile's Campus NaaS approach removes the burden of traditional network maintenance while ensuring predictable costs and performance that includes a financially backed performance guarantee.