

National American University Takes Control With Managed Services

National American University

Rapid City, South Dakota

Business Challenges

- Enable distribution of productive applications and processes across multiple locations
- Provide internal resources with tools to enhance educational programs
- Standardize infrastructure to enable path to growth

Network Solution

- Managed LAN
- Managed WAN
- Private IP

Business Value

- **Connect.** Communications between remote locations improved without strain on internal resources
- **Optimize.** Better support for programs such as distance learning
- **Grow.** Infrastructure facilitates future improvements such as data center, video conferencing, and wireless Internet access

“When we add a campus, we follow the same design. It’s something already working, already tested, and built with the future in mind.

John Buxton

**Director of System Information Technology
National American University**

National American University switches from Frame Relay to a Managed

LAN/Managed WAN solution for standardization and improved performance.

Company Background and Industry

National American University was established in 1941 as a private, regionally accredited institution of higher learning. The university provides graduate, undergraduate, and continuing education programs through traditional, accelerated, and distance delivery methods. Today, National American University serves students through 13 Midwest campuses.

Key Business Challenges

National American University has grown to prominence with minimal IT resources. Each campus pursued voice and data connectivity without a uniform plan in place, resulting in disparate, non-compatible arrangements. Each campus had acquired its own PBX, with some supporting T1 interfaces and some using analog lines. Campuses had also entered into separate Internet access agreements, some of which involved unsecured routers.

Some sites were depending on as few as one IT expert. When equipment failure occurred, a great deal of time was lost tracking down someone who could diagnose the problem, repair or replace the hardware, and restore service.

As a result, the university system was hampered in its efforts to bring operational efficiencies and process improvements to all locations in a uniform fashion. In fact, many applications—a uniform dialing plan, video conferencing, and enhanced security—were nearly impossible with the existing infrastructure.

The Solution

National American University chose Managed LAN and Managed WAN for its 13 current locations, as well as its future sites. Managed LAN service broadens and extends Managed Network Services capabilities beyond the WAN router to the LAN switch. The Verizon Business-provided transport network—Private IP—is based on MultiProtocol Label Switching (MPLS) technology, which integrates performance and traffic management capabilities supporting Voice over IP and video conferencing. Bandwidth for remote sites has been increased from 512K to 1.544 Mbps.

The solution includes reporting that allows customers to see critical metrics such as latency, volume, congestion, and discarded frames. Verizon Business also provides the Customer Portal, which enables real-time tracking of the managed-service implementation process, project status, inventory tracking, change management requests, and trouble tickets. With proactive network monitoring, trouble tickets can be opened automatically and customers can be quickly notified of the trouble. In fact, Verizon Business’s service level agreement provides for customer notification within 15 minutes of trouble identification.

Why Verizon Business?

Since 1989, Verizon Business has run Managed LAN, Managed WAN, and IP networks for some of the world’s most successful companies. Today, the company manages more than 40,000 LAN devices. A comprehensive management solution enables National American University to leverage Verizon Business’s technical expertise in design, planning,

Case Study

About Verizon Business

- Leading provider of advanced communications solutions for business and government
 - Owns and operates one of the most expansive IP backbone networks in the world
 - Offers services on 6 continents, in 150 countries, and more than 2,800 cities around the globe
 - Offers innovative applications to help simplify, secure, and transform businesses
 - Delivers converged and integrated services that bring communication solutions together
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implementation, and network management. And Verizon Business Managed Network Services provides a one-stop shop for network design and standardization, including equipment such as routers, switches, and phones.

Results and Next Steps

By implementing Managed LAN and Managed WAN provided by Verizon Business, National American University was able to standardize communications characteristics across its university system, resulting in improved business processes and IT support. The university's wide-ranging campus locations are now centrally managed, not only by Verizon Business, but also by John Buxton, University Director of System Information Technology, and his staff, who are apprised of network metrics for each site and can plan accordingly.

Buxton particularly appreciates the ability to bring consistency to the phone system. He is saving on long distance charges between campuses, while providing each staff member with a unique external phone number. Overall, the uniform four-digit, intra-campus dialing plan leads to better communication and campus integration and cohesiveness.

Reducing downtime is another key result, according to Buxton. Service level agreements offer a guarantee of 3.5 hours or less for time to repair. Tickets are automatically opened, and immediate steps toward resolution are taken. "Now, in a situation where a network connection goes down in one of our campuses, I know that when I hear about it a ticket is already being worked," says Buxton.

The IT director says that the transformation has not only changed the network, but also the mindset of the entire organization. There are plans to implement data center, video conferencing, and wireless Internet access for students—all projects that would not have been possible a year ago. "The data center is possible, because of how the LAN and WAN have been put into place," says Buxton. "We can put critical online applications, such as distance-learning functions, in the data center and allow all the campuses to benefit from that."

And when National American University begins to capitalize on its success by adding campuses, they have a logical growth plan. In fact, from the beginning, Verizon Business worked with Buxton to develop a template for integration of future sites. "When we add a campus, we follow the same design," he says. "It's something already working, already tested, and built with the future in mind."

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