

EUREKA COLLEGE MODERNIZES ITS NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE WITH MANAGED NETWORK SERVICES

Case study

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■ For Eureka College, a liberal arts college in Illinois, fusing tradition with transformation is part of its history. Founded by abolitionists in 1855, Eureka paved the way for equality as the third U.S. college to admit men and women on an equal basis.

It also counts many notable alumni among its ranks – including former President Ronald Reagan, 42 college and university presidents, and seven governors and congress members – and was designated a national historic district in 2010.

Today, technology plays an essential role in Eureka's commitment to transformation. The proliferation of IoT devices, learning management systems, and a new era of blended learning have intensified network connectivity demands. Eureka's outdated infrastructure and understaffed IT team meant the college was unable to fully realize its transformational vision.

Eureka knew that modernizing its network was the foundational first piece of an upgraded campus technology program. Without a network refresh, the historic campus would remain stuck in the past. After carefully analyzing challenges and potential partners, Eureka decided to outsource its network management to Boldyn Networks for Higher Education – a leading managed technology services provider solely focused on higher education.



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Boldyn has empowered the Eureka community to honor our history of transformational educational experiences.

Dr. Ann Fulop, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.



Pervasive wireless

The cornerstone of Eureka's strategy is Managed Network Services from Boldyn Networks. Managed Network Services addresses higher education administrative network and wireless challenges while providing IT service and support and financial predictability. It delivers high-speed connectivity and a vastly improved and consistent user experience for students, faculty, and staff.

With Managed Network Services, Eureka is meeting the challenges of blended learning head-on. Students can attend remote lectures with high-quality video, listen to recordings of classes without lag, and access richer digital content offered by instructors across the entire campus, whether they are indoors or outdoors.

"We've seen immediate improvements to academic outcomes, with faculty easily and confidently adapting pedagogy to meet student needs with no technical limitations," said Dr. Ann Fulop, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Student satisfaction has also greatly improved. While students had once "given up" on an improved network, now they experience blazing-fast Wi-Fi that seamlessly integrates with all their smart devices—like iPhones, iPads, Smart TVs, gaming consoles, and personal assistants like Alexa — across campus.

What's more, Managed Network Services played an essential role during the pandemic by allowing Eureka to remain open for the delivery of in-person classes. Students and faculty in isolation and quarantine could reliably attend classes via Meeting Owl and Zoom technologies. Academic expectations remained the same throughout the pandemic – attendance, grading, assignments. Students graduated and will graduate with the same work readiness and transferrable skills that they have always brought to employers.

Upgrading Eureka's network for the 21st century

Boldyn completed a full network refresh to bring Eureka into the 21st century. The installation included updating the college's outdated equipment and fiber connections that were not up to industry standards in historical buildings – some buildings which date back to the 1800s – to support a pervasive network that connects the entire campus.

What was once a spotty, frustrating service has been transformed into a consistent high-speed network with vastly improved ease of use. Students can now easily connect up to seven devices through a seamless single sign-on (SSO) process using their school credentials. Boldyn modernized and currently manages the network in 13 residence halls and 14 administrative buildings, delivering blazing-fast Wi-Fi every day to 600 students, faculty, and staff.

The enhanced network also supports a new suite of services for administration and faculty, such as contact tracing with location analytics by Boldyn partner degree analytics, better support for flipped classrooms so lectures can move online and class time can be reserved for interactive projects, and new learning applications. Eureka has even begun tracking student engagement at campus events through QR code check-ins, which the previous network was unable to support.

Support, service, and strategy for the future

Managed Network Services also provides invaluable staffing support to Eureka's small IT department. Situated in a rural location between two major hubs for IT talent, the college regularly experienced difficulty attracting and maintaining staff. The IT staff recruitment, training, and expertise needed to modernize and manage the network would have been a costly and time-consuming challenge.

Limited IT resources turned routine network maintenance into a headache. The strained IT department had to approach long-term challenges with short-term fixes, leaving the network haphazardly "patched up" with no significant service improvements.

Boldyn is delivering the following Managed Network Services that unlock time on the IT team:

- IT workflow and network access control management
- 24/7/375 help desk
- Regular equipment refreshes
- SLA-performance metrics

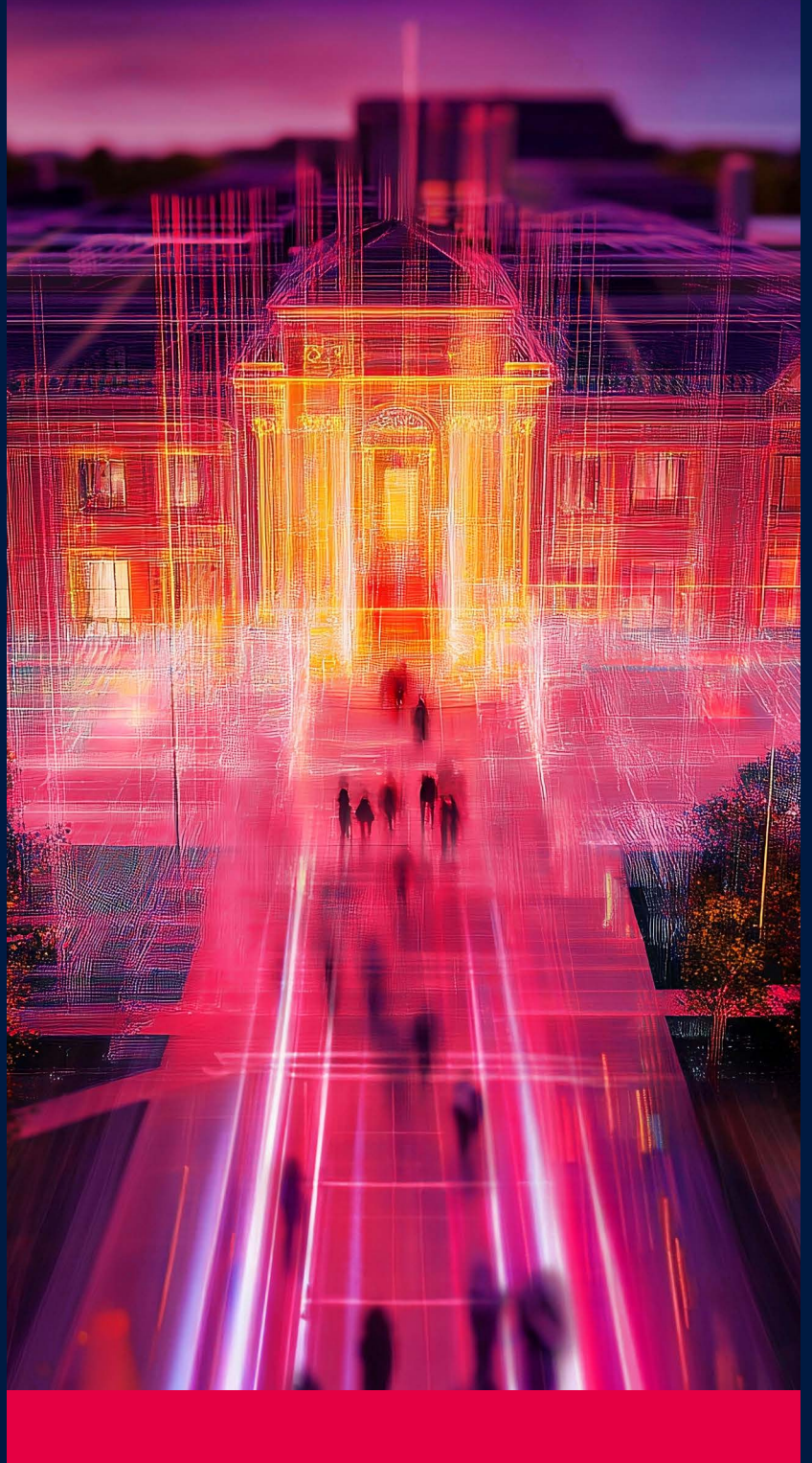
With Boldyn Networks for Higher Education, the Eureka IT team received the support it needed to upgrade and maintain the network without additional hiring. IT team members can now balance their workloads, reducing stress and pressure. Rather than evening and night shifts, teams can now work a standard 8 to 5 model. Eureka has access to the full team of Boldyn experts for strategic guidance and support as it plans the next steps for IT innovation.

Honoring history, transforming technology

Managed Network Services helped Eureka transform a historic campus into one befitting the digital age. This allowed the university's IT team to focus on many strategic initiatives, including migrating applications to the cloud, building a creative design lab for music and art students, and developing a laptop loaner program.

"As a college with a very small IT team, our partnership with Boldyn is crucial to enable us to think strategically about how to use technology for student success now and in the future. Managed Network Services has empowered the Eureka community to honor our history of transformational educational experiences," said Dr. Fulop.





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