



GORDON COLLEGE DELIVERS THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION ON COMPELLENT SAN



For students heading off to college today, a high-tech campus is no longer considered a luxury—it's an expectation. For Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts, integrating IT throughout campus life is key to recruiting students and providing a rich educational experience.

This small liberal arts Christian college takes a big approach when it comes to technology in higher education. "Today's students expect education at their fingertips," says Jim MacDonald, vice president of finance and administration, at Gordon College. "Technology has become a currency in education. Students probably rank the quality and breadth of technology services like Internet access right up there with the cost of tuition as factors for choosing a college."

More than 2,000 campus citizens benefit from technology service offerings at the Wenham campus including a wireless network, iTunes, digital TV delivered via the Internet (IP TV) and an encrypted backup to protect all academic files. Each of these services require a significant amount of data storage support behind them. As the team recalls, keeping up with the pace of technology had put strain on Gordon College's data center.

"Previously, we were in a technology crisis mode every single day. On a few occasions we'd run out of storage and systems would go down," explains Russ Leathe, director of networking and computer services, Gordon College. "Then Compellent came along and raised SAN technology to the next level."

Supporting growing demand for these cutting-edge campus-wide services required a highly scalable, feature-rich storage system. Gordon College installed two Compellent® Storage Center™ SANs. Since Gordon College already had Fibre Channel switches in place, migrating from the existing SAN environment after peak hours was simple and cost-effective. Leathe says that end-users quickly noticed the positive performance and reliability of Compellent.

MANAGEMENT TOOLS ALLOW GORDON COLLEGE TO GO GREEN AND SAVE GREEN

Gordon College is an institution that takes environmental issues very seriously. Standardizing on the Compellent SAN has streamlined provisioning and enabled Gordon rapid, modular growth. Currently, between 30 and 50 servers boot from each SAN, speeding administration, increasing server performance and availability and reducing data center floor space. Eliminating power-hungry internal server disks has helped create a "greener" data center, reducing power consumption and CO₂ emissions.



"All of a sudden Compellent came along and raised SAN technology to the next level by incorporating the feature-rich tools, scalability and design essential for our highly competitive college environment."

RUSS LEATHE
Director of Networking and Computer Services
Gordon College

RESULTS REPORTED BY GORDON COLLEGE

- » Simple, modular scalability helps Gordon College keep up with the latest online educational tools
- » Robust, reliable platform protects student data and ensures compliance
- » Boot from SAN technology enables server provisioning in minutes
- » Copilot Services provides timely alerts and information, saving valuable IT hours
- » Tiered storage drives down Gordon College's IT costs
- » Intuitive interface reduces storage management time to hours a week
- » Eliminating power-hungry internal server disks has helped Gordon create a "greener" data center, reducing power consumption and CO₂ emissions.

OPERATING SYSTEMS

- » Microsoft Windows 2003

KEY APPLICATIONS

- » Microsoft SQL Server
- » Microsoft Terminal Services
- » Proprietary ERP
- » IP TV

COPILOT SERVICES

Copilot, Compellent's comprehensive customer service and technical support offering, provides exceptional system support through online incident tracking and automated event notification.

For Gordon College, Copilot means peace of mind and huge time savings. Leathe says, "The Copilot team recently helped us replace a failed drive in under two hours, saving our team several weekends of work."

"By having solutions in place like Compellent, our infrastructure is prepared to grow and adapt as new educational methods are introduced, allowing us to offer competitive student services and provide the best possible learning environment."

RUSS LEATHE
Director of Networking
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"With very little training, our staff can now create new servers to support classroom and dorm room initiatives in a matter of minutes without downtime," Leathe explains. "Before Compellent, that process could take days."

Unlike the previous SAN, Compellent enables Leathe to cost-effectively plan and manage growth with integrated, easy-to-use software tools. Compellent's Enterprise Manager software identifies trends and usage patterns, allowing Leathe and his team to better forecast storage growth for budgetary purposes.

The IT team can also eliminate allocated but unused storage capacity with Compellent's Thin Provisioning software, called Dynamic Capacity™. Dynamic Capacity allows users to allocate any size virtual volume upfront, but only consume physical capacity when data is written. This allows Leathe and his team to delay storage purchases until necessary.

AUTOMATED TIERED STORAGE AND CONTINUOUS REPLAYS DRIVE DOWN COSTS

In addition, Compellent's Data Progression™ software, provides an automated, cost-effective, tiered environment so Gordon College can store valuable production data on high-performance Tier 1 drives, while moving idle data to less expensive storage according to policy.

"Since we know that 90 percent of our data will sit idle, we can take advantage of less expensive second- or third-tier storage, which greatly reduces our IT costs," Leathe explains.

To protect precious student and administrative data, Gordon uses Compellent's Data Instant Replay™ and Remote Instant Replay™ software to create a high number of space-efficient snapshots, called Replays, which are stored on Tier 3 drives. In the event of a disk failure, data can be easily restored from the most recent Replay in under 10 minutes.

As Gordon College undertakes an extensive enterprise resource planning upgrade, the Compellent Replays have provided a simple safety net for the project.

"During the upgrade one of our software engineers phoned me after he had accidentally deleted a week's worth of development code," says Brian Vienneau, systems manager, Gordon College. "Data Instant Replay allowed me to recover the lost data before we finished our conversation."

COMPELLENT PREPARES GORDON FOR FUTURE LEARNING TOOLS

With Compellent, Gordon is better able to incorporate exciting new technologies as strategic learning tools in classrooms and libraries. Digital study aids, including videotaped lectures, required TV programs and electronic research papers, are available on demand to multiple students and lecturers at once. These learning tools are vital to the success of both the students and the college.

"If you don't include multimedia technologies and different ways of learning in the classroom, student satisfaction levels may be compromised," Leathe says. "By having solutions in place like Compellent, our infrastructure is prepared to grow and adapt as new educational methods are introduced, allowing us to offer competitive student services and provide the best possible learning environment."