

CASE STUDY

Texas A&M

The Customer:

Texas A&M is the nation's sixth largest university in enrollment and boasts one of the largest campuses in the nation with 5,200 acres, including a 434-acre research park. Unlike most large universities, Texas A&M has one centralized IT group for networking, its Computing and Information Services (CIS) Network Group, who is responsible for the entire campus network backbone and LAN's in over 340 buildings, including student residence halls, student labs, and data centers.

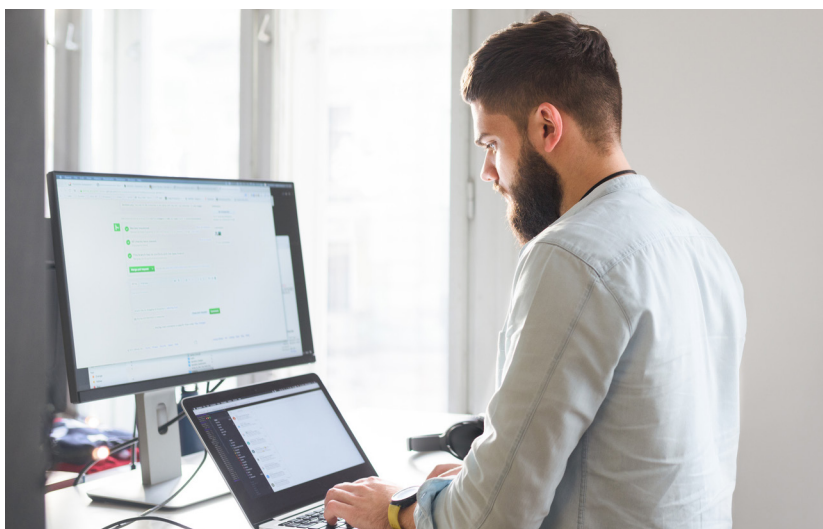


The Customer

Texas A&M's network management group relied on a conglomerate of tools to maintain the network backbone. Managing multiple tools was time consuming and required the use of manpower to learn the tools, manage them, and try to make sense of the disparate data provided by each tool. They needed a way to simplify the management of the network and spend the time saved on more productive tasks. "Writing scripts for multiple tools takes an excessive amount of time and energy and with the backbone being continuously modified and changed, we needed way to streamline these tools in order to efficiently manage the network," said Matthew Almand, Chief Network Engineer for Texas A&M University.

The Solution

After reviewing several options, Texas A&M chose NetMRI, a proactive network management solution, to manage its vast multi-vendor network as one whole system. With its built-in expert rules engine, NetMRI monitors, detects, and





“The Infoblox devices provide the necessary resiliency and features that allow us to ensure non-stop delivery of the network identity services essential to providing access to critical applications and help us better serve our patients”

Bill Lazarus

Area Vice President of Information Systems at SJHS

reports on network issues before they become problems for Texas A&M’s IT staff. After installing NetMRI, Texas A&M was able to replace most of its monitoring tools, resulting in an enormous reduction in overall network management and maintenance time. This dramatic reduction enables the Network Group to be proactive instead of reactive.

“The initial hook was that NetMRI contained all of our best practices in a box,” said Almand. “It is very easy to install and simply understands how the internal network infrastructure works. NetMRI is truly a unique solution and I haven’t found another product that is able to carry out the functions and tasks that it performs.”

One of the biggest benefits for Texas A&M was NetMRI’s Policy Management capabilities. This feature enables them to catalogue configurations, monitor changes, enforce policy and standards, and even execute changes whenever necessary—quickly and easily. Now, they can make rapid changes across multiple devices from different vendors without requiring significant programming time. NetMRI also makes configuration modification of devices on the network simple and hassle free. It formalizes Texas A&M’s best practices before the IT staff rolls out new pieces of equipment. NetMRI also maintains copies of current and previous configurations, which enables the network group to revert to an earlier configuration at any time. By comparing Texas A&M’s currently running configurations with its previous configurations, NetMRI also serves as an excellent backup tool.

Summary

Overall, NetMRI has greatly simplified and streamlined Texas A&M’s overall network management, which enables the network engineering staff to work more efficiently. NetMRI simplifies everything by providing Texas A&M with one solution that unifies control of key aspects of its infrastructure. Most importantly, the Network Group now has the time to proactively manage the network, rather than consecutively running multiple tools.



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