

Case Study: D-Link Brings Affordable, Single Network Wi-Fi Solution To Redeemer University College For Enhanced Internet Access And Reliability



Redeemer University College is an undergraduate Christian liberal arts and science university committed to academic excellence. Situated in Ancaster, Ontario, the school's campus provides an environment in which to study and learn, offering theatre events, concerts, art exhibitions, sporting events, and lecture series as well as conferring degrees and diplomas.

The Challenge

Redeemer University College was being hindered by its spotty, unreliable Wi-Fi network that was patched together with random access points and lacked central communication.

Faced with tight budget requirements, the school set out to deploy a universal wireless solution that would blanket the 90-acre campus – including academic buildings, student dorms, the auditorium, gymnasium and several outlying structures – under a single network integration.

“We had some access points, but lacked overall coverage. Dependability was a big issue and we experienced many outages, which hampered productivity,” said Walter Vanderkolk, network manager, Redeemer University College. “Our goal was to implement a unified wireless solution to provide Internet access to an increasing volume of users and at the same time offer improved reliability.”

Vanderkolk turned to Sam Vergiris, D-Link account executive in the nearby Oakville area, because “we had a great track record with D-Link in the past and felt their equipment would meet our needs. They were eager to help us out, even with such a small budget.”

Vergiris, together with D-Link engineer Daniel Snell, conducted a site survey by walking the campus grounds to gauge distances to determine which access points should be installed and where they would provide optimal coverage. They quickly provided an affordable, comprehensive plan that Vanderkolk was able to present to University IT committee and Finance committee, where it was approved.

Redeemer University College, a 90-acre campus located in Ancaster, Ontario, needed to implement a reliable unified wireless solution to provide Internet access to an increasing volume of users.



The Solution

Vanderkolk and his network associate installed one D-Link DWS-3026 control switch and 48 D-Link DWL-3500AP access points during the summer, calling the process “a piece of cake.”

“It has been rock solid, like nothing I’ve ever seen before. We were able to bring it all together online with our central switch, which we call the ‘Mother Ship’. Communication is absolutely seamless, almost instant. That is one of the key factors that has been resolved.”

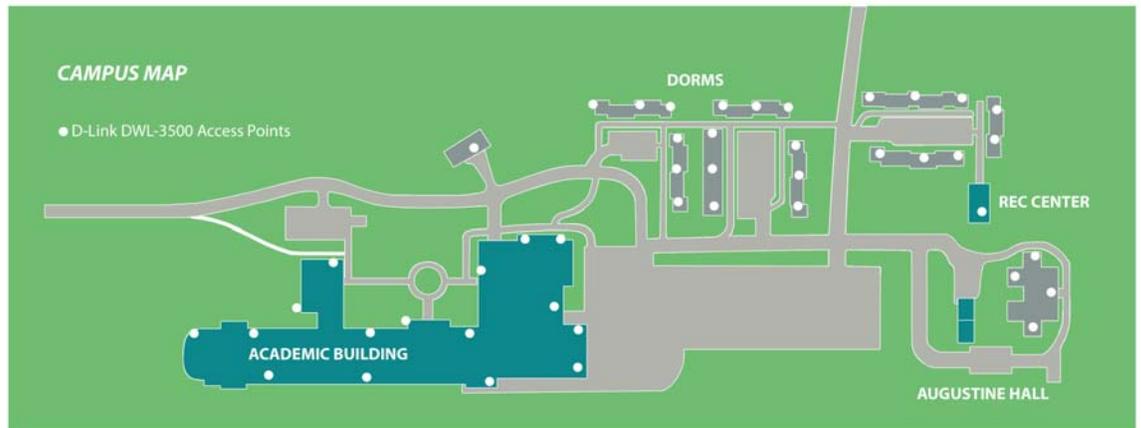
“It’s been rock solid, like nothing I’ve ever seen before. We’re had 391 days without downtime.”

— Walter Vanderkolk, network manager, Redeemer University College

The total wireless solution offers many benefits to Redeemer both from a student and administrative standpoint. "Now we can tell instantly if there is a problem because it sends up email alerts. If an AP goes down the others will cover it, but we haven't needed it because it has never gone down," he said. "We've had 391 days without downtime, and that was only because of a power outage, and it had gone 200 days before that."

Now, in wired academic buildings, the university is able to run Moodle, an open source course management software that allows students to instantaneously access curriculums, webcasts and presentations in the classrooms via the Internet.

Redeemer University College installed D-Link's wireless solution, consisting of the DWS-3026 and 48 DWL-3500APs, for seamless communication throughout their 90-acre campus.



Improved Wi-Fi also offers advantages to staff in the administrative buildings where wired computers are configured to default to wireless as a backup when there are power fluctuations – decreasing downtime and boosting productivity.

"The system has already paid for itself because we don't have to maintain a networking infrastructure and don't have to spend any capital on equipment," Vanderkolk added. "It's saved us thousands of dollars, and for a small private Christian university, every penny counts."

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