Case Study:
A Fully Online University

NexusTek supported this online university to fulfill its mission by assuming responsibility for network and server monitoring, ensuring that students can access their course spaces and materials at any time.

Overview

Location: U.S. Mountain West Region

Company Size: 600+ employees

Type: Public University

Industry: Education, Colleges & Universities

Customer Profile:

This organization is an independent, fully accredited, 100% online state university. The university is part of an esteemed state university program, which includes multiple institutions of high regard.

Solution Benefits:

- Gives students reliable access to resources
- Reduces demands on internal IT team
- Reduces threat of OS hacking
- Minimizes system downtime
- Keeps client updated on infrastructure

Business Need

As a fully online university, the university needs to offer its students and instructors reliable online access to instruction and learning resources. Because the university's online courses are specifically tailored for adult students with busy schedules, it is essential that servers and networking be in good working order at all times to ensure 24-hour access to learning resources.

The university had a small internal IT team but was looking for a managed service provider (MSP) to assume responsibility for server and network monitoring for the university. They needed an MSP who could do more than simply react to infrastructure issues; they needed a technology partner who would proactively maintain their infrastructure and monitor for issues that could cause downtime.

Solution

To support this customer to maintain system reliability, NexusTek shaped an infrastructure co-management services agreement around the customer's unique needs. Leveraging Fortinet technology, NexusTek implemented network monitoring within the university's environment. NexusTek also assumed responsibility for proactive monitoring of the customer's servers, as well as for installing software patches and updates.

To ensure the university is equipped to respond effectively to disaster events that might cause downtime and data loss, NexusTek prepared a disaster recovery plan. NexusTek also provided a Service Delivery Manager (SDM) to provide the university's IT leadership with regular updates on their infrastructure and any upcoming needs.

Results

With NexusTek as a member of the university's IT co-management team, the customer no longer has to worry about network or server functionality. NexusTek's engineers provide around-the-clock monitoring to ensure that the servers that host the university's learning resources stay up and running reliably. This support from NexusTek is integral to the university's fulfillment of its mission to provide flexible learning opportunities to students that fit conveniently into their varied schedules.

Students of the university need anytime access to their online learning platforms, which allow them to attend class or watch recordings of previous classes, to interact with peers, to access and download instructional materials, and to communicate with instructors. Online platforms are also used to submit assignments and take tests, making a high-uptime environment a must-have for students with variable schedules. Having NexusTek on their team to keep 24/7 watch over network and server functionality helps the university to deliver a quality learning experience to students.

Similarly, NexusTek's proactive maintenance and SDM calls with the university help them to actively prevent issues that might impact students' ability to access learning spaces and materials. As The university's technology partner, NexusTek holds regular calls with the customer in which the SDM discusses the current state of their infrastructure as well as any future upgrades that might be needed to maintain optimal functionality. This provides the university with the insights they need to make proactive decisions regarding infrastructure upkeep and to avoid the inevitable hardware failures that occur when preventive maintenance is neglected.

Another proactive service NexusTek provides is server patch management. Timely installation of software patches and updates ensures that any vulnerabilities identified by the software manufacturer are addressed quickly. This reduces the risk of cyber incidents that could create downtime and put student, faculty, and employee information at risk.

Finally, NexusTek has equipped the university with a disaster plan that explains the procedures to be taken in the event of a crisis (e.g., natural disaster, power outage, ransomware attacks) that impacts infrastructure functionality. This disaster plan ensures that, should the worst happen, their team knows what steps to take—and in what order—to contain the damage, protect university and stakeholder data, and restore functionality as quickly as possible.

Together, the services that NexusTek provides to the university facilitate a smooth and problem-free delivery of instruction to students, as well as a consistent and reliable working environment for staff and faculty. The university's IT leaders can focus on the strategic initiatives that will serve the university well in the long term, knowing that their day-to-day infrastructure management is expertly handled.

This case study was prepared with the customer's full knowledge and involvement. To respect the customer's privacy, we have omitted their name, logo, and any other identifying information.