

SUCCESS STORY: DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Since its founding in 1769 to educate Native students, English youth, and others, Dartmouth has provided an intimate and inspirational setting where talented faculty, students, and staff – diverse in background but united in purpose—contribute to the strength of an exciting academic community that transcends all disciplines. Their mission is to educate students and prepare them for a lifetime of learning and responsible leadership, with assistance from faculty dedicated to teaching, research, and the cultivation of knowledge.

LEARN HOW THE DARTMOUTH COLLEGE COMMUNITY WAS ENABLED TO WORK FROM ANYWHERE AMIDST COVID-19.

Challenge

The Dartmouth College community of students, faculty, researchers, employees and alumni are united around a steadfast goal of fulfilling Dartmouth's mission. For Felix Windt, Senior Director for Network Services, he too strives to do his part. For students and faculty, this means implementing technology that enhances the classroom experience and education that is foundational to a Dartmouth education. For researchers, it's providing leading computing and networking services to advance teaching and research. Windt innovates with new ideas and consults with community members who want to further explore their own areas of expertise with information and technology.

When the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to spread, Windt knew that time was of the essence to address Dartmouth's ongoing challenge of managing a traditional on-premises VoIP phone system, as well as some very old desk phones that were falling out of support. Not only did this system prevent the Dartmouth community from operating at peak productivity levels, it provided no real options for supporting the mobile workforce that became a reality.

Solution

GoToConnect is the cloud-hosted solution that fit the bill for Dartmouth. Key contributing factors included ease of use, integrated software solution, ease of deployment, reliability and predictable pricing. GoToConnect has a strong foundation in the K-12 education sector and has branched out into higher education after building and testing out competitive services. "We also liked that GoToConnect had a decent presence in school systems, as education as a vertical tends to be somewhat different – higher ed specifically is the epitome of bring your own device, or BYOD, both on the student and faculty side. This is particularly true for Dartmouth," said Windt.

The transition to the cloud has been a steady and straightforward process. Windt and his team have replaced thousands of desk phones with software, headsets, computers, and Polycom phones. This also includes many public phones, such as wall-mounted phones in labs, phones in elevators, and blue light phones that act as panic buttons to notify Dartmouth's Safety and Security office. In addition, Dartmouth easily converted numerous service and frontline support call centers to GoTo Contact.

Results

Dartmouth College has converted thousands of users, with their sights set on thousands more. As with any substantial technological migration, there are bound to be bumps along the way, but Windt assures that they've been easily managed. "Because of the many use cases we support, not every conversion is simple, and each department has their own workflows that we try to take into account when migrating them to the new platform. Overall the migration has been a resounding success," he states.

Additionally, Dartmouth has seen a substantial increase in soft phone usage. An impressive number of people are opting for a smart phone or laptop software installation, empowering them to place and receive phone calls using their Dartmouth number, wherever they are.

So far, **the response from the Dartmouth community has been overwhelmingly encouraging**, giving Windt hope for further adoption and usage. "The feedback from Dartmouth users has been very positive. Once they discover the enhanced functionality that a software-based phone can bring, they are starting to report that they will not be needing a traditional, hardware-based phone once they return to campus – they're sticking with GoToConnect," said Windt.

When asked to describe his personal overall experience, Windt exclaimed, "I just wish we'd started on this path earlier!"



"Adding the ability to use software clients on smart phones and laptops with GoToConnect has been incredibly useful in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having also had experience with this configuration for a few months before suddenly adding many, many new remote workers was very helpful."

- Felix Windt, Assistant Director, Network Services, Information, Technology and Consulting, Dartmouth College

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