

# Longwood University

## Meeting the Needs of Higher Education

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*Frank Moore, Assistant Vice President for Information Technology, Longwood University*

CASE STUDY | EDUCATION



LONGWOOD  
UNIVERSITY

### BUSINESS NEED

Reliable, manageable, complete messaging solution

### SOLUTION

Mirapoint Message Server

### BOTTOM LINE

Mirapoint provides reliable, easy-to-manage solution campus-wide

### Background

Longwood University is a coeducational, comprehensive state institution offering programs leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in a wide variety of subjects. Founded in 1839 and located half way between Richmond and Lynchburg, Virginia, it is the third oldest public four year educational institution in the state.

Full-time students, faculty, staff, and deposit-paid students all have email accounts totaling about 5600 users. Deposit-paid students are perspective high school seniors who are interested in attending Longwood and have paid a deposit.

Messaging is vital to Longwood. A policy states that official communications with students is via email. “In an institution of higher education, if you don't have email, everything grinds to a halt,” says Frank Moore, Assistant Vice President for Information Technology at Longwood.

### The Business Need

In 2002, Longwood University unveiled a new, campus-wide messaging system custom built by one of the school's technicians with an expertise in Linux systems. Two years later, however, the technician was hired away by another school, but he had not trained anyone to maintain the system. “We had to pay him an honorarium to come back and fix it one time, but it was crashing three or four times a week,” recalls Moore. “I finally went to the head of the engineering group responsible for that system and said, find me an off-the-shelf solution.”

Moore had to do something—and fast. It was already November 2004, and the school had a policy that no major IT system changes could be implemented when the school was in session. If a new system wasn't deployed before the end of the semester break, early January 2005, the next window of opportunity was several months away.



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## The Mirapoint Solution

By chance, Moore saw a presentation by Mirapoint at a conference he was attending. Sending out an email to other educational CIOs within the state, he solicited comments and opinions from any that had experience with Mirapoint. "Based on the positive responses, I told our lead engineer to start negotiating with Mirapoint," says Moore.

Moore brought in a demo Mirapoint system in November, enlisting five or six technicians in the engineering group to evaluate it for two weeks, then expanding to all 42 people in his group. Once he was fully confident that the solution lived up to expectations, the Mirapoint messaging system was deployed to all users in early January.

The installation was performed in stealth mode. "We put just the faculty through a migration to Active Directory, and there was an uproar about that," says Moore. "And we had upgraded to the new, latest and greatest open-source system before that. I couldn't tell them we were moving to yet another latest and greatest system. We just told them that we were enhancing the functionality of the current system, so it had to be a seamless transition. Hardly anyone noticed."

Moore has noticed the reliability of the Mirapoint solution. "Since it went in, it's never gone down." He has also noticed the acceptance of features like Webmail and calendaring. "Webmail is phenomenal. Faculty and staff are able to check email from home and the calendaring feature is fast becoming a popular feature among faculty and staff. And we plan to rollout the Microsoft Outlook SynQ capability this summer."

The Mirapoint solution is also offering powerful spam filtering and integrated, industry-leading virus scanning technology. Additionally, to provide redundancy, Moore added a second Mirapoint appliance for failover.

## The Bottom Line

Mirapoint delivered the fully integrated "off-the-shelf" solution that Moore was looking for. The system has been reliable with zero downtime to date. Deployment was fast and easy, "The migration was seamless and truly transparent to users. We didn't even need to provide training," says Moore. "The differences were minute."

Users have embraced the system's Webmail and calendaring features, and spam and viruses have not been an issue with Mirapoint's integrated spam filtering and virus scanning.

The contrast between the old, homegrown system and the Mirapoint solution has been dramatic. "With Mirapoint we have a messaging system that's reliable," says Moore.

## About Mirapoint

Mirapoint® is the market leader in appliance-based solutions for secure message networks in enterprise, service provider, and education organizations, with more than 100 million mailboxes served and secured worldwide. Customers use Mirapoint appliances including the Message Server mail appliance and RazorGate mail security appliance to build the messaging infrastructure that intelligently serves, secures and manages email. Mirapoint is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, with offices throughout North America, Europe and Asia. For more information on Mirapoint, visit its Website at [www.mirapoint.com](http://www.mirapoint.com).

## Configuration

- One Mirapoint Message Server M4000 Appliance