

Providing a reliable and optimized network



FORDHAM
The Jesuit University of New York

DEMAND PERFORMANCE

"We've worked with a lot of companies for a lot of different reasons, and AlertSite is one of the best. They do everything right the first time..."

The University

Fordham University is a fully accredited university with more than 15,000 students and approximately 1,200 faculty members on four campuses in and around New York City. Similar to many other universities, Fordham faces the ongoing challenge of keeping its growing academic community connected to each other and to the resources necessary to manage academic and administrative functions, all within firm budget parameters. Fordham depends on a flexible and responsive information technology department to enable critical technology functions—from Internet access in residence halls to applications that support admissions, registration, grading, billing and other aspects of the day-to-day business of higher education.

At Fordham, Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for providing round-the-clock support for the information, communication and technology needs of more than 16,000 students and faculty. With so many critical data centers needed to run these capabilities, a network slowdown or crash could severely hamper operations. Therefore it is imperative ITS continually monitor all of its servers to ensure the university's systems are always functioning at peak performance.

The Problem

In 2001 a staff shortage in the ITS department made it difficult to consistently and accurately monitor university systems, particularly during the overnight hours. When network outages did occur late at night, the resources ITS had at the time could not provide immediate notification of the problem. Instead, ITS had to wait until morning to identify and correct any issues. This late and reactive approach to addressing IT problems was not well suited to Fordham's dynamic academic community. ITS needed a solution to augment its current capabilities to deliver a more proactive, efficient service to its constituents.

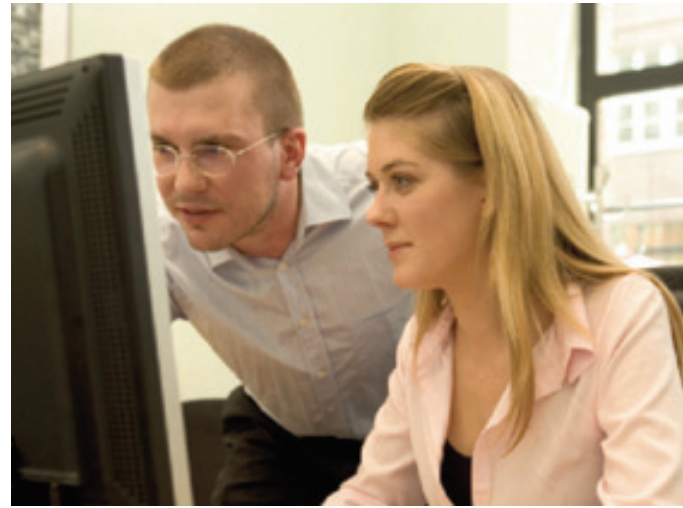


In trying to address the difficulties resulting from minimal staff support, ITS encountered an additional setback-cost. As a non-profit entity, Fordham University could not afford an expensive solution to support ITS. Whichever solution they selected needed to be precise, dependable, accurate and cost effective.

The Solution

Fordham ITS was looking for a reliable Web performance testing and monitoring solution that could also offer good value in terms of cost and customer service. Specifically, ITS required a solution that could serve as an “extra pair of eyes” to keep track of the performance of the university’s multiple servers, some of which were housed on different campuses. Further, ITS needed accurate, reliable and immediate notification of any problems, as well as clear reporting of collected measurements.

AlertSite® provided a cost-effective solution that met all of Fordham’s needs. First, AlertSite helped to monitor both internal Fordham University sites and the university’s Web page. They performed regular application testing to ensure academic grading systems, course registration systems and the university’s e-mail systems were responsive and functioning. AlertSite’s diagnostic capabilities were also essential in distinguishing between a campus-wide issue with network servers and a simple connectivity problem on the user’s end.



Second, AlertSite supplemented its monitoring and testing of Fordham’s systems with timely and detailed notifications via e-mail and text message that made the ITS staff immediately aware of the type and severity of any network problems. The information in these alerts also helped ITS determine whether the problem warranted further investigation. On several occasions AlertSite® performance advisors also phoned the ITS team to make sure they had seen the alerts. These AlertSite services were important to keeping critical Fordham University applications functioning at peak performance 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

AlertSite’s continual monitoring also met a third ITS need in the form of compiling detailed reports that documented network uptime and provided a clear historical record of the system’s overall performance.





These accounts proved to be valuable in safeguarding ITS against constituents claiming system downtime. They were also essential in helping ITS track system usage trends over the course of the school year in order to anticipate any potential network problems before they had widespread implications across the university community.

In addition to the technical capabilities Fordham ITS required, AlertSite also provided fast, friendly and effective customer service, above and beyond what ITS had previously experienced. AlertSite experts were always ready to offer immediate and thorough support. Whether helping to identify and diagnose a server issue or addressing a question about network performance data, AlertSite consistently delivered the fast and reliable assistance that became an essential resource for ITS.

“Our original reason for working with AlertSite was to augment our limited staff, but over the years they have become so much more than an extra pair of eyes on our network,” said Jason Benedict, director of computer services at Fordham University. “We’ve worked with a lot of companies for a lot of different reasons, and AlertSite is one of the best. They do everything right the first time, and the value for the services they provide is priceless, particularly for a non-profit organization that cannot afford an expensive solution.”



The Conclusion

When Fordham University faced staff shortages in its Information Technology Services department in 2001, the university turned to AlertSite to accurately, continually and cost-effectively monitor and test the performance of the critical communications, grading, scheduling and record-keeping systems necessary for successful university operations.

AlertSite's technology provided visibility into the cumulative performance of Fordham's network. It also helped the university address—and subsequently improve—users' online experiences by supplying ITS with real-time alerts about network issues and by creating reports that could be used to anticipate potential problems. AlertSite supplemented this technical expertise with a committed customer service team that extended the capabilities of ITS to provide the Fordham University community with a reliable and optimized network, all within a manageable pricing structure suitable for a non-profit entity.

As a result, Fordham University is still an AlertSite customer and continues to benefit from AlertSite's expanding portfolio of services.

“Fordham highly recommends and stands behind AlertSite and our decision to stay with them over the past five years,” said Benedict. “There are very few companies that do what they say they're going to do, the way they say they're going to do it. AlertSite is one of those companies. Their cost proposition is phenomenal and their team is always so willing to help. We're overwhelmingly happy and we intend to be an AlertSite partner for a long time.”



AlertSite® is a leading provider of Web performance measurement, systems monitoring and security vulnerability scanning products that ensure a customer's critical Web-based services are always available and running at peak performance. AlertSite services benefit all types and sizes of businesses and organizations.



© 2008 AlertSite. All rights reserved. AlertSite is a registered trademark and Performance Profile of Boca Internet Technologies, Inc. All other products, services and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

877.302.5378
www.alertsite.com