



# Notre Dame migrates students and alumni to Google Apps, saving \$1.5M and increasing student satisfaction by 36%

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## AT A GLANCE

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### What they wanted to do:

- Provide students with an up-to-date email system offering integrated services and collaborative tools
- Measurably upgrade communication infrastructure, without adding expense

### What they did:

- Integrated Google Apps to provide easy, effective email, calendaring, and document collaboration

### What they accomplished:

- Reduced calls to the campus help desk by 20%
  - Increased student satisfaction by 36%
  - Realized \$1.5M in savings
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## Institution

Founded in 1842, the University of Notre Dame is a private Catholic institution located near South Bend, Indiana. The University consists of 12,000 students, 6,000 faculty and staff, and 150,000 alumni. The pillars of Notre Dame are research, teaching and learning, and service – nearly 80% of students engage in some form of voluntary community service during their years at the University.



## Challenge

Notre Dame faced a challenge. Its email system was not living up to the reliability standards expected by the campus community, and it did not adequately support its requirements for efficient, dependable communication. Furthermore, its functions stopped at email – and the school wanted a solution for campus-wide calendaring and scheduling. Students were increasingly unsatisfied with on-campus email, and appealed to university leadership for more communications functionality. Gmail was mentioned repeatedly as the preferred choice. In fact, every candidate running for 2008 student government included the petition to switch to Google in their platform. The students were speaking – and IT heard them loud and clear. It was time to make a significant change.

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**“The wealth of tools that Google Apps offers, and Google’s ability to provide a cost-effective robust service, made us all wish we had chosen to move this direction sooner.”**

**Katie Rose**, Program Manager for Enterprise Initiatives, Office of Information Technologies

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## Solution

Notre Dame’s IT team turned to Google Apps Education Edition for a variety of reasons. First, since students were already familiar with the Google interface, they knew it would be easily accepted and users could move onto the new platform without missing a beat. Next, the IT team was drawn to the variety of integrated services included in Google Apps, and how they worked seamlessly across a range of platforms and mobile devices. Notre Dame started their roll-out with the incoming class of 2013 – putting freshmen directly on Google Apps before school started. Onboarding went so well that the team then migrated the remaining 15,000 students to the new platform in just one night without any technical issues. “On Tuesday night, they were on the old system,” recalls Katie Rose, Program Manager for Enterprise Initiatives, Office of Information Technologies. “They woke up Wednesday morning happy to find that they were now on Google.”

Compared to other campus email solutions, the IT team found the Google deployment “far superior,” and, technically speaking, much easier to implement. Using its own authentication system, Notre Dame took advantage of Google APIs to

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**Paul Turner**

Manager of Academic Technologies  
Office of Information Technologies

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## ABOUT GOOGLE APPS EDUCATION EDITION

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Google Apps Education Edition is a free suite of hosted communication and collaboration applications designed for schools and universities. Google Apps includes Gmail (webmail services), Google Calendar (shared calendaring), Google Docs (online document, spreadsheet, presentation, and form creation and sharing) Google Video (secure and private video sharing – 10GB free) and Google Sites (team website creation with videos, images, gadgets and documents integration), as well as administrative tools, customer support, and access to APIs to integrate Google Apps with existing IT systems.

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For more information, visit  
[www.google.com/a/edu](http://www.google.com/a/edu)

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get things up and running right away, adding the customization they needed with minimal effort. “It was incredible that we got so much functionality for free for just two weeks of easy work,” says Paul Turner, Manager of Academic Technologies, Office of Information Technologies.

“Since most students were already familiar with these services, migration really wasn’t an issue,” Turner adds. Fewer than 3% of the student body needed support, and the Help Desk immediately enjoyed a 20% decrease in call volume. “We didn’t have to answer many questions or experience a support burden,” he continued. “The services are so intuitive that students hit the ground running.”

The transition went so well that the University saw another opportunity: to bring the same benefits to their 150,000 member alumni community. Over a few short weeks, Notre Dame’s Alumni Office easily migrated all of these accounts over to Google Apps, enjoying both a smooth transition and a marked increase in user activity on email accounts. Katie Rose adds, “The wealth of tools that Google Apps offers, and Google’s ability to provide a cost-effective robust service, made us all wish we had chosen to move in this direction sooner.”

### Benefits

The team noticed immediate results in user satisfaction. People increased their use of email, had 20% fewer questions for the Help Desk, and indicated a 36% increase in IT satisfaction since the migration to Google Apps (data provided by IT annual survey). What’s more, the IT team determined that by switching students over to Google Apps, they were able to realize \$1.5 million in savings. The technology committee of Notre Dame’s student government has also expressed enthusiasm at the improved functionality of the email system provided by Google. “Not only did we get a reliable and fast email service in a short time, Google also provided us with a host of collaborative tools that students were asking for, such as calendaring and document sharing that students could start using immediately,” continued Rose.

“Before the switch to Apps, frustration with email was always at the top of the list of student complaints,” Turner concludes. “After moving to Google Apps Education Edition, this issue is off the table so we can focus on larger and more strategic objectives.”

