

## INDUSTRY:

Higher Education

## CHALLENGE:

To meet the growing IT demands of its faculty and students, a fast-growing research university faced a renovate-or-buy decision.

## SOLUTION:

Tier III certified Iron Mountain Data Center with 24x7x365 support, data modules, and integrated DCIM software with power usage analytics to drive sustainability

## VALUE:

- Physical infrastructure now managed by expert service provider so data center is always up and running.
- Cut capital investment needed to renovate and then maintain aging data centers over the long term.
- IT team now building out new services to accommodate growth instead of flipping switches and turning dials.



## CASE STUDY:

### Arizona State University

## IMPROVE SERVICE, REDUCE INVESTMENT

With demands on their IT infrastructures growing and resources declining, today's higher education institutions face critical decisions. Do they increase technology funding and sacrifice some student services? Do they decline research dollars because they don't have the resources for high performance computing? Do they jeopardize their educational mission for the sake of technology?

Arizona State University (ASU) is one of the fastest-growing universities in the country. In one ten-year period, research volumes tripled and the on-campus student population grew by 43 percent. During a single year, online enrollments grew by almost half. And the growth isn't slowing. By 2020, the University expects an on-campus population of 85,000, an online roster of 100,000, and research expenditures of \$700 million.

But the university's IT infrastructure wasn't keeping up. "We had five data centers scattered across four campuses," said CIO Gordon Wishon. "Not a single one was capable of supporting an institution of this scale and magnitude. The infrastructure simply wasn't up to the standard that would be expected for a world-class educational institution like ASU."

The fundamental challenge, according to Wishon, was that "the scale at which we operate placed great pressure on our infrastructure—in particular on our technical staff—and on our ability to keep up with demand. The demand curve continues to grow while the resource curve is generally flat."

The CIO faced a crucial decision: invest in renovating and running those aging on-premises data centers, or find a partner to provide world-class data center services. "That led us to pursue creative solutions to traditional IT infrastructure needs," said Wishon.

“...the support, dependability, reliability, and security that Iron Mountain can offer is far better than we could ever have afforded ourselves.”

- Gordon Wishon, CIO

## Higher quality services, less money

Wishon found a partner who could deliver higher quality data center services for less money.

“We have a Tier III data center practically in our backyard,” he said. “It made great sense for us to colocate at Iron Mountain rather than make the capital investment to renovate aging data centers that I couldn’t afford to maintain over the long run anyway.”

ASU not only considers Iron Mountain a partner in technology service delivery, they consider them to be part of the campus and the network. “The support, dependability, reliability, and security that Iron Mountain can offer,” said Wishon, “is far better than we could ever have afforded ourselves.”

“We no longer need teams of people maintaining the HVAC and CRAC units and the power,” explained Jay Steed,

Assistant VP for IT Operations and Customer Support. “When I get up in the morning, I’m not concerned about whether or not my data center is going to be up and running from a facilities perspective.”

## A return to core competencies

With Iron Mountain providing data center services, Wishon’s resources are freed to focus on their core competencies. “The availability of the data center allowed us to redirect resources to much more important tasks—serving the technology needs of students and faculty—than flipping switches and turning dials,” he said.

“We now focus resources on actually building out new services,” Steed added. “We want to rebuild the infrastructure and rebuild the network to allow for new growth in services as the student population grows.”

ASU also improved the sustainability of its IT operations. “Iron Mountain gives us greater visibility into our power consumption,” said Steed. “We get monitors and tools that allow us to know more about the health of our data center. Those are tools we couldn’t have built ourselves.”

## A champion for change

ASU is not alone in facing critical renovate-or-buy decisions. But they are a champion for taking advantage of new opportunities.

“There are opportunities that education institutions can either take advantage of or ignore,” said Steed. “Instead of taking advantage of those opportunities, they continue to build out their own data centers and their own infrastructure, trying (and failing) to keep up with the fully redundant, fully available services that are out there for purchase.”

By colocating at Iron Mountain, ASU found a data center services provider that could deliver higher quality service at a lower total cost—practically in the University’s backyard. ASU’s IT team can now focus on what really matters: delivering sustainable IT services to serve the growing student populations and expanding research programs.

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## ABOUT IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM), founded in 1951, is the global leader for storage and information management services. Trusted by more than 220,000 organizations around the world, and with a real estate network of more than 85 million square feet across more than 1,400 facilities in over 50 countries, Iron Mountain stores and protects billions of valued assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include **information management**, **digital transformation**, **secure storage**, **secure destruction**, as well as **data centers**, **cloud services** and **art storage and logistics**, Iron Mountain helps customers lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working. Visit [www.ironmountain.com](http://www.ironmountain.com) for more information.

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