



Army Athletics Boosts IT Network for Game Time

When Army Athletics' information technology infrastructure didn't have the bandwidth needed to support the hundreds of high-power users, including media, coaches and administrative personnel, the Army Athletics Association (AAA) sought a reliable solution that would allow for secure, uninterrupted, high-speed Wi-Fi, that was scalable and came with powerful management tools. AAA engaged Sharp for their information technology upgrade to improve the athletic department's overall network performance and efficiency.

Business Environment Challenges

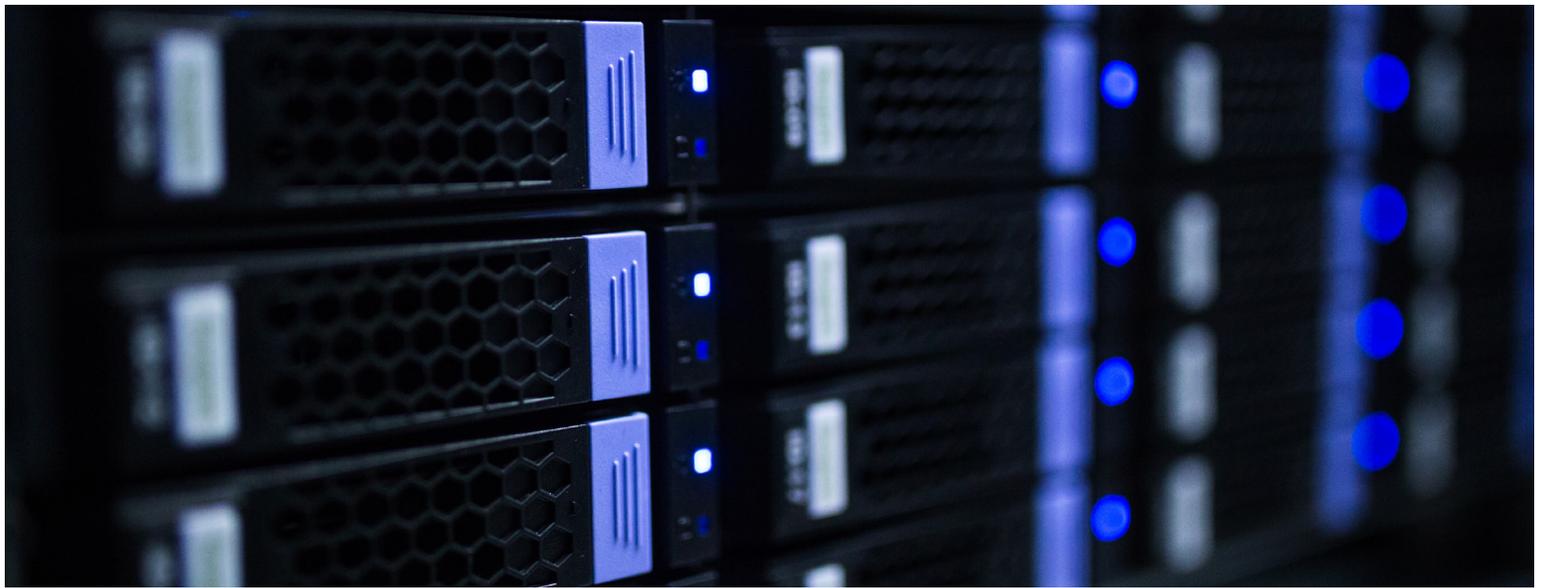
Located just 45 minutes north of New York City, West Point sits high on a hill overlooking the Hudson River, surrounded by beautiful NY state parks. A national landmark, West Point's campus encompasses 15,974 acres and is home to many historic sites, buildings, and monuments. It is the oldest of the five American service academies and educates cadets for commissioning into the United States Army. The academy is well known for its sports teams, including 15 men's and nine women's teams in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

The AAA's current IT infrastructure was comprised of off-the-shelf switches and routers and was not scalable enough to support the streaming needs of their growing number of media visitors. They struggled to accommodate their users across the vast campus and realized that the current system was costly and inefficient.

Technology Solutions

Security and high-volume streaming were important, as well as establishing a system that could grow with their increasing internet demand. After a detailed assessment and survey of their current technology, Sharp was able to outfit the organization with a high-performance core network with increased functionality and scalability as well as network monitoring management and security.

"Sharp built out a true network infrastructure that interconnects all of the buildings around our stadium and we've seen drastic improvements," said Nick DeGennaro, AAA's Information Technology Supervisor.



Proven Results

With a completely rebuilt network, the organization realized immediate productivity improvements and nearly eliminated downtime. AAA's Network Operations Center (NOC) support is provided to help manage the 20 switches, 2 firewalls and 67 Wi-Fi access points across the 10+ buildings, dozens of staff offices, 8 gates, locker rooms, training rooms, concession stands, practice fields and the security tower. Since broadcasters required secure access to connect their video or audio streaming equipment for events, Sharp has also provided managed firewall services.

For the first time, coaches have internet on the field, the sidelines and on the practice fields and the media was able to live stream and broadcast from anywhere on the campus.

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— **Nick DeGennaro**

AAA's Information Technology Supervisor

Industry

Sports, Collegiate/Nonprofit

Challenges

- Unreliable, and in some areas non-existent, Wi-Fi
- No network management visibility
- No ability to scale to offer new services
- Needed to support broadcasting and live streaming
- Extremely large and structurally challenging service area to cover

Solutions

- Networking Hardware: Brocade core switches, Ruckus access points
- Ruckus SmartZone management and CloudPath web authentication
- 24 x 7 Network monitoring and management
- Network Operations Center (NOC) support
- Local team for local support plus national helpdesk
- Enhanced firewall services

Results

- Improved overall visibility into the network
- Increased uptime
- Faster overall network speeds and better coverage
- Reliable IT support with quick response times
- Ongoing network management provided by a dedicated Sharp team



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