



CUSTOMER STORY

How this large university is completing a 3 year project in 18 months.

Learn how a large university leveraged SiteOwl to track security installations in real time, reducing errors and saving thousands of hours.





Fast-tracking campus security – how Wake Forest University is completing a 3 -year security overhaul in just 18 months.

With more than 25 buildings and a rapidly expanding security infrastructure, Wake Forest University needed a way to manage installations, track progress in real time, and coordinate multiple vendors efficiently. SiteOwl was the solution they chose.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1834, Wake Forest University is a private institution in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, serving over 9,000 students across its undergraduate and graduate programs. Known for its strong academic reputation, the university also prioritizes campus safety, but its security infrastructure had become increasingly difficult to manage. Over time, security investments were made reactively, leading to a mix of legacy and modern systems spread across 25+ buildings.

The university's security team faced several challenges, including fragmented data stored in spreadsheets and emails, inconsistent vendor coordination, and a lack of real-time visibility into security installations. Managing thousands of devices—such as access control systems and surveillance cameras—was time-consuming, requiring manual site visits to verify installations and track maintenance needs.

To address these inefficiencies, Wake Forest launched its largest security upgrade in university history. What would typically take three years needed to be completed in just 18 months. The project required a solution that could centralize security data, streamline vendor collaboration, and provide real-time project tracking. SiteOwl was the platform they chose.

INDUSTRY

Higher Education

SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE SIZE

25+ buildings, 1,700+ devices

SECURITY TEAM SIZE

A small team of 6 members managing projects and vendors.

KEY CHALLENGES

- Lack of centralized security data
- Lack of visibility into installation progress
- Manual and inefficient documentation

SITUATION

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We were constantly updating blueprints with any design changes, then sending them back to vendors for updates. The process was slow, inefficient, and left too much room for miscommunication.

SOLUTION

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With SiteOwl, instead of making phone calls and sending emails back and forth, we can track everything in real time. Now, if something changes, the team knows instantly—it's no longer a guessing game.

CHALLENGES

Before adopting SiteOwl, Wake Forest University's security team struggled with several key issues that made managing and upgrading their security infrastructure difficult.

1. Fragmented and inaccessible security system information

Security-related information was scattered across multiple platforms, including spreadsheets, emails, and even handwritten notes. Without a central repository, tracking installations, service histories, and project updates required time-consuming manual work. This made it difficult to plan upgrades, track aging equipment, and ensure security coverage across campus. "If we had continued down the path that existed before, it was all just a bunch of individual fragments stored on people's desktops or in emails. There wasn't a central location where someone could pick up and understand the full scope of a project," said Tim Driscoll, Asset Management Director.

2. Vendor coordination and accountability

The university relied on multiple vendors for security installations and maintenance, but there was no clear system for tracking their progress or verifying work in real time. Vendors worked off separate documents, leading to delays, miscommunication, and installation inconsistencies. "When we had to coordinate with vendors, it was a game of phone tag and email chains. We didn't know what was done and what wasn't, and that led to a lot of wasted time following up and fixing miscommunications," noted Jennifer Hawks, Project Manager.

3. Lack of real-time visibility into installation progress

Security managers had to rely on site visits to verify installations, causing unnecessary delays. Changes to blueprints often resulted in lengthy revision cycles before work could proceed.

Jennifer noted "We were constantly updating blueprints with design changes, then sending them back to vendors for updates. The process was slow, inefficient, and left too much room for miscommunication."

4. Manual and inefficient documentation processes

Security teams relied on outdated methods, including paper blueprints and handwritten notes. This led to errors, outdated records, and difficulty tracking project milestones.

Without a structured documentation system, security data was scattered across multiple platforms, making it difficult to track installations, plan for future upgrades, or ensure devices were serviced on time.



"The amount of paperwork and redundant steps in our old process was overwhelming. Even finding out whether a camera was installed properly required digging through files and walking the site."

- Tim Driscoll, Director of Asset Management

SOLUTION

Recognizing the need for a more efficient and structured approach to security management, Wake Forest University turned to SiteOwl. The university implemented SiteOwl to centralize security data, improve vendor coordination, and eliminate inefficiencies in project execution. By leveraging SiteOwl's real-time tracking and automation capabilities, Wake Forest ensured that every security device was properly documented, installation progress was visible at all times, and service requests were tracked without delays. With SiteOwl, the university gained full oversight of its security infrastructure, keeping its ambitious 18-month project on schedule and minimizing costly errors.

Recognizing the urgency, the team re-evaluated their approach, leveraging SiteOwl to optimize planning, improve coordination, and accelerate execution.

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"The initial project was to put card readers and panic buttons in every classroom... My proposal was 3 years. But we got buy-in from faculty, students, and trustees to do it in 18 months—and we're ahead of schedule. I attribute that to being able to see it lined out in SiteOwl."

- James Byrd, Director Deacon One

1. A centralized, real-time security data platform

SiteOwl provided a single source of truth for all security project details, eliminating data silos and making it easier to track installations, service records, and device lifecycles. Jennifer mentioned "The more work you do upfront in SiteOwl, the easier it is later. It's so intuitive that vendors, installers, and even those unfamiliar with our systems can quickly understand what's needed."

With its security infrastructure fully digitized, Wake Forest streamlined operations and shifted to a proactive asset management strategy, ensuring upgrades and replacements happen on schedule rather than as reactive fixes.

"Five, six, seven years from now, if I need to go into this residence hall and replace all these devices that are 10 years old, SiteOwl gives me the means of doing that." said James Byrd.

2. Improved vendor coordination and accountability

Vendors had direct access to project plans, allowing them to update progress and upload installation photos in real time. This reduced miscommunication and kept projects on schedule. "Because of SiteOwl's structure... our vendor could pull up the week's work schedule and see which building they were going to be in before arriving on campus. I really think it optimized the planning and the actual execution of the project." noted James.

3. Real-time project tracking and installation verification

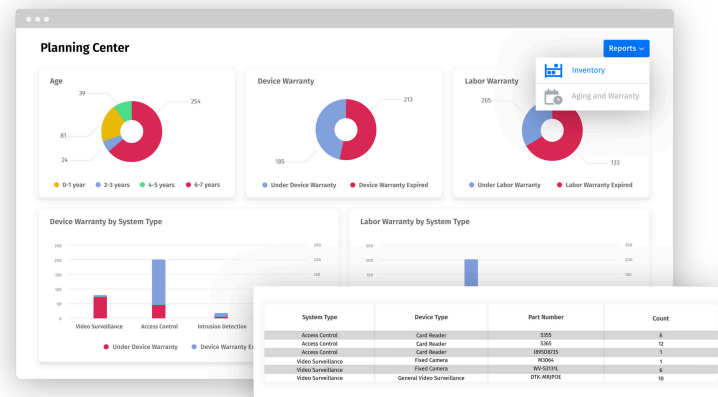
SiteOwl's mobile and desktop applications allowed the security team to monitor installations remotely, validate completed work with photos, and flag issues instantly, reducing unnecessary site visits. "We're getting real-time feedback from the installers, so if an issue comes up, we can address it before it becomes a major problem." noted the project manager said Jennifer.

4. Automated documentation and streamlined reporting

SiteOwl digitized the security project lifecycle, automating reports, tracking warranty information, and reducing paperwork. This made it easy to generate reports on project completion, device status, and maintenance needs. “We no longer have to scramble to put together reports or chase down paperwork. Everything is available in SiteOwl, making our job much easier.” said Jennifer.

It's taken us longer to do projects [before SiteOwl]... and when we get done with the projects, I don't know that we've got it as well documented as we could have, because there was not this one place... SiteOwl does it beautifully.

– James Byrd, Director Deacon One



RESULTS & IMPACT

By implementing SiteOwl, Wake Forest University achieved significant improvements in security project execution, vendor coordination, and infrastructure management.

- ✓ On track to complete a 3 year security upgrade in just 18 months, with real-time tracking and improved vendor coordination.
- ✓ 30% faster project timelines – SiteOwl's centralized system reduced inefficiencies, allowing installations to progress smoothly and eliminating unnecessary delays.
- ✓ 50% reduction in time spent on site walks – The mobile application allowed security managers to verify installations remotely.
- ✓ 25% decrease in change orders – Instant updates and better communication reduced errors, minimizing rework and associated costs.

CONCLUSION

Through SiteOwl's advanced security management platform, Wake Forest University eliminated inefficiencies, improved vendor collaboration, and gained full visibility into its security infrastructure. By centralizing data and enabling real-time tracking, the university created a more structured, data-driven approach to security operations, reducing delays and cutting unnecessary costs.

For universities and institutions looking to modernize security management, SiteOwl offers the tools needed to streamline operations, improve accountability, and ensure projects are completed on time and within budget. Transform your security operations with SiteOwl today.

Contact SiteOwl today to learn how our platform can transform your security operations and create a safer environment for all.

For more information visit, www.siteowl.com or request a demo.