



Florida State University Serves its Students and Community through Innovation and Collaboration



www.fsu.edu 

At Florida State University (FSU), two very different but vital phone applications are made possible by Avaya. The main campus, multiple branch campuses and dispersed faculty members – some located around the globe – are empowered to work remotely and in future will be on a unified, integrated communications platform. Closer to home, FSU houses the “Real Time Crime Center” in collaboration with Leon County and its Sherriff’s Department and the Tallahassee Police Department to serve area citizens in times of crisis.

Complex Communications

With a main campus is in Tallahassee, Florida, branch campuses across the state Florida State University is one of the USA’s elite research universities. Its mission is to disseminate information and help progress knowledge, but an overly complex communications technology environment distracts IT system support from being able to focus as much time as it wants on supporting this academic goal.

Bobby Sprinkle, Chief Technology Officer for Information Technology Services (ITS) at FSU explains: “We currently have a farm of around 70 VMs running over our current phone system, and I don’t want my team in the business of running datacenters. We also have too many communication platforms, app providers and network switches. My vision is to simplify FSU’s communications into a hybrid mix of on-premises and public cloud, and we are moving ahead on that journey with Avaya.”



The Cloud Experience

The cloud is not a destination – it is a set of tools, and the question should not be “which cloud should I go for?” but “what do I want to achieve and how can the cloud help get me there?”

Moving communications to the cloud is about the value it creates to enable organizations - including education providers - to act faster, with less effort, and with greater results. The flexible Avaya framework enables users to move away from the huge set of on-demand apps and beyond obsolete definitions of public and private cloud so they can combine the benefits of the Avaya portfolio together with leading cloud platforms and existing investments to accelerate innovation and decrease migration risk.

One Vision

The Avaya phone system at Florida State University is critical and supports many important functions. It must work both on and off campus, as well as provide baseline communication support for the student, IT, and healthcare call centers. FSU recently switched the majority of its communications over to soft phones with is a first step in a much larger transition to becoming one hundred percent in the cloud communications excepting where hard phones must be used for legal reasons such as emergency call boxes and elevator phones.



Avaya provides us with the flexibility to provide phone services to anywhere in the world and this is enormously important to us.”

— **Bobby Sprinkle**, Chief Technology Officer for Information Technology Services (ITS), FSU



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CHALLENGES

- Global footprint with multiple branch campuses and faculty members on different numbers.
- Requirement to provide baseline call center support for students, IT, and health services.
- Crowded and hard to maintain IT environment due to multiple comms platforms, network switches and app providers.
- Comms environment with a 70 VM farm running over current Avaya phone system.
- Complexity distracts from supporting the business of learning and the dissemination of knowledge.

VALUE CREATED

- Avaya supports remote and hybrid working as well as mix of softphone and on-prem phones.
- Heading towards a simplified communications network with all locations on FSU numbers.
- Self-service portal to set voicemail, email and call forwarding rules releasing IT to focus elsewhere.
- Seamless integration with Microsoft Teams across locations in US and beyond
- Flexibility to support FSU and collaborative Real Time Crime Center

“The softphone experience has been great so far,” says Bobby Sprinkle. “We have a pan-global footprint with little pockets of faculty all over the state, in other states, and overseas. I actually started my position in March of 2020. Without Avaya, we would never have been able to switch to remote working so fast - within a week - when COVID-19 stay-at-home rules started. Avaya provides us with the flexibility to provide phone services to anywhere in the world and this is enormously important to us.”

FSU’s vision is to get its multiple campuses onto a unified comms platform so that you can dial-in from anywhere in the world and the phone systems are integrated and running in a similar way using FSU numbers. The Tallahassee and Panama City, Florida, campuses are already onboard, and the Ringling campus will be moving over soon. The next step will be discussions about transitioning its international campuses and faculty members.

Crucially, Avaya integrates easily and seamlessly with Microsoft Teams, FSU’s communications platform of choice: “It’s harder for some people but personally, I no longer need a phone on my desk and its Avaya that’s making it possible,” says Bobby Sprinkle.

Heading Towards Simplification

FSU faculty are already enjoying an improved experience when it comes to ease-of-use. A self-service portal is now available where users can change their own voicemail, email and call forwarding rules, which helps to release IT support to focus on other areas.

In addition, FSU found that migrating individual staff over to softphones can be incredibly rapid – within a day. It anticipates the Ringling campus to take under a month as it is already on an Avaya system.

“The future plan is to go to public cloud except for what is legally required to be on-premises,” says Bobby Sprinkle. “We are working towards a simplification of our communications platform and expect that Avaya will be one of our key strategic technology partners moving forward.”

Real Time Crime Center

Like many large universities in the US, Florida State University has its own police force, and its campus PD acts as the 911 back-up call center for Leon County Sherriff’s Department. To serve its communities, Leon County, Leon County Sheriff’s Office, and the Tallahassee Police Department, have worked to create a Real-Time Crime Center as a shared resource, based at FSU. This facility will allow the three partners to share vital information and analyses resulting in faster and safer emergency response. They consider this a potential model to serve broader communities as well.



“ I no longer need a phone on my desk as I can call make a phone call using Teams that goes to someone’s landline phone and its Avaya that’s making it possible.”

—**Bobby Sprinkle**, Chief Technology Officer for Information Technology Services (ITS), FSU



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

About Florida State University

Founded in 1851, FSU is one of the USA's elite research universities. With around 13,570 total employees and 43,953 students from every Florida county and 130 countries, its main campus is in Tallahassee. Its other campus locations include Panama City, Florida; The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and cultural properties in Sarasota; and the College of Medicine satellite and rural campuses. FSU International Programs offers year-round Florida State study centers in Panama City, Panama, London, Florence, Italy and Valencia, Spain, with additional offerings of more than 40 diverse programs in 20 different locations in Europe, Latin America and Asia, including China.



About Avaya

Businesses are built by the experiences they provide, and every day millions of those experiences are delivered by Avaya Holdings Corp. (NYSE: AVYA). Avaya is shaping the future of customer experiences, with innovation and partnerships that deliver game-changing business benefits. Our communications solutions power immersive, personalized, and memorable customer experiences to help organizations achieve their strategic ambitions and desired outcomes. Together, we are committed to helping grow your business by delivering Experiences That Matter.

Learn more at www.avaya.com.

