

ELEVATING THE DIGITAL CAMPUS: THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON'S STRATEGIC LEAP TO WI-FI 7

In partnership with RUCKUS and UberData Networks, the university modernized its infrastructure to support high-density learning and the “Wi-Fi is foundational” reality of modern higher education.



The
University
of Akron

Customer
The University of Akron

Location
Ohio

Closing the Connectivity Gap in Higher Education

The University of Akron operates in a Division 1 environment where digital connectivity is as essential as the power it runs on for student success and retention. Amid this competitive reality, the university's aging infrastructure struggled to meet the heavy demands of a tech-savvy student body who view reliable connectivity as campus table stakes.

The student onboarding process was difficult and time-consuming, creating a significant burden for university IT staff and a frustrating first impression for

students during their critical move-in period. For faculty, inconsistent wireless access prevented them from confidently using modern digital instruction tools.

The university issued an RFP for a comprehensive network overhaul. What they received were numerous bids for a standard Wi-Fi 6E protocol, a safe but limited path forward. While 6E was a modern standard at the time, it represented the end of a hardware generation. It would have forced the university into a shorter hardware lifecycle, leaving them behind as student device capabilities quickly outpaced the network's ceiling.

RUCKUS and UberData Networks offered a future-facing bid. The enterprise network provider and channel partner differentiated themselves with an innovative Wi-Fi 7 solution that could meet student demands and faculty needs alike. Wi-Fi 7 offered a massive leap in performance through multi-link operation (MLO) and 320 MHz channels that doubled the throughput of 6E—a foundation to support the next decade of high-bandwidth needs.

The technical superiority of Wi-Fi 7, backed by industry-leading expertise and the added value of dedicated on-site support during the critical transition, won the university over.



“Higher education environments are some of the most demanding when it comes to wireless. You’re dealing with thousands of users, multiple devices per person, and an expectation that everything just works — everywhere, all the time.”

Jeff Van Horne
CEO, UberData Networks

“RUCKUS is purpose-built for high-density environments like higher education. The technology is designed to perform reliably even when the network is under heavy load.”

John Putnam
Territory Account Manager, RUCKUS

A Robust Ecosystem for High-Density Performance

The project featured North America’s first large-scale campus Wi-Fi 7 rollout, managed by the RUCKUS One AI-driven cloud controller. This unique and intelligent system cross-correlates data to identify core network issues automatically. In fact, the tool had the chance to show off during the solution’s proof of concept, when in mere moments it diagnosed deep-seated problems within the university’s core network. These were problems that had been previously invisible or untraceable to administrators.

To resolve the historical (and stressful) spike in tickets for a lean IT team during move-in weeks, RUCKUS and UberData deployed the Cloudpath Enrollment System. Historically, the IT team braced for an onslaught of help tickets during the new semester move-in crunch. Cloudpath eased this congestion by automating the onboarding of “headless” devices that today’s students bring to campus, like gaming consoles, smart lighting, tablets, smart watches, and even 3D printers. Following its implementation alongside RUCKUS One, the university reported a landmark achievement: zero tickets submitted during its subsequent new semester mass onboarding. They’ve since reported a 30% reduction in help tickets overall and an increase in throughput by 15 to 20%. Early Wi-Fi 7 testing is expected to result in a 20 to 30% bandwidth improvement.

UberData Networks acted as a strategic advisor throughout the process, working in close alignment with RUCKUS to match the technical design with the university’s specific performance goals. Despite a compressed 12-month schedule and the difficulty of supporting a 16,000-strong campus presence, the implementation was a massive success.



“We treat [the network] as critical infrastructure. The best kind of connectivity is one in which your attention is not drawn to it, because it is working as intended.”

Mark Byers
Director of Infrastructure, The University of Akron

“Communication was key throughout the process. We worked closely with RUCKUS and the University to make sure expectations were aligned from the beginning and carried through the entire deployment.”

Jason Hall
Director of Engineering, UberData Networks

A High-Performance Foundation for Future Growth

Thanks to robust transition support from the onsite team, the new infrastructure provided immediate relief across campus. The university transitioned from an 8 Gb to a 12 Gb internet circuit, ensuring the “backbone” of the campus could handle peak network traffic. Since deployment, the RUCKUS One controller has reported an average of three times the number of concurrent devices on the network compared to the previous year’s maximum spike. The university notes the system routinely hits 15,000 concurrent users.

Likewise, the selection of Wi-Fi 7 meant that the University of Akron successfully extended its hardware lifecycle by two to three years. They’ve reported that roughly 10% of network issues are now auto-remediated, and that coverage is so strong they plan to partially disable or even remove some access points entirely. Faculty are now empowered to request custom, secure SSIDs and passwords for specific events months in advance. This network confidence lets the IT team serve as a strategic partner in campus life, instead of simply a helpdesk for connection emergencies.

- 100% reduction in move-in week service tickets, and an overall ticket reduction of 30%
- 300% increase in average device density compared to previous year’s peak
- 50% boost in internet circuit capacity
- 10% of network issues auto-remediated
- 15,000 concurrent users supported at regular intervals



“The AI identifies and often fixes problems before students notice. When the wireless foundation is solid, it enables everything else—from digital learning to future technology initiatives.”

Andrea Nunley
Associate Chief Information Officer,
The University of Akron

“Being ahead of the game now and still able to run some of the biggest [school] events is a big draw. I’m confident that this is a well-supported and actively maintained solution.”

Mark Byers
Director of Infrastructure, The University of Akron

The university and UberData are already moving into the next phase of expansion. The foundational network layer is currently being extended to provide a seamless digital experience for students and faculty across the campus footprint and athletic arenas.

About UberData Networks

UberData Networks is a national technology integrator and managed services provider specializing in high-performance network infrastructure for demanding environments including higher education, hospitality, healthcare, and enterprise campuses. The company delivers advanced wired and wireless networking solutions, managed services, and strategic consulting focused on improving operational performance, user experience, and long-term technology lifecycle value.

About RUCKUS Networks

RUCKUS Networks delivers purpose-driven networks that offer superior business outcomes in demanding environments. Our enterprise networking solutions combine high-performance Wi-Fi, network switching, and AI-powered automation to prevent network issues, reduce operational complexity, and keep performance predictable.

www.ruckusnetworks.com

Visit our website or contact your local RUCKUS representative for more information.

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CS-300157-EN (05/26)

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