

CASE STUDY

Fulton Public Schools Optimizes and Meets Growth Demands Using Auvik

Fulton Public Schools

Challenges

- Growth and scaling up
- Lack of network visibility
- Configuration & backups

Solution

- Proactive mapping & monitoring
- Automated config backups & syslog retention
- Centralized management of network operations

Benefits

- Operational efficiency
- Time back to focus on bigger projects
- Reduced MTTR

About Fulton Public Schools

Located in central Missouri, Fulton is a smaller city of just 12,500 people. But even though the community is small, its educational presence is big! The city of Fulton boasts quite a history of educational institutions dating as far back as 1851, when what's now Westminster College welcomed its first students. And in 1868, the very first public school opened its doors in the local Baptist Church—as the school building had not completed on schedule.

Fast forward to today, and the Fulton Public School district is home to over 2,000 students grades K-12. There is an excellent early childhood program and a daycare facility that offers both before- and after- school childcare. Fulton Public Schools is setting the standard as model educational leaders, while constantly making strides to fulfill their mission—to engage all students to function as successful, responsible, and productive citizens.

Challenges

Over the next few years, the public school district is conducting intensive planning processes for long-term growth. That includes adding additional IT equipment. The first big project for the IT team was incorporating video surveillance equipment to all campuses. This is a huge undertaking for a small team of four, as they look to incorporate the ability to monitor and manage those devices from a central position. Using a tool like Auvik provides a comprehensive map of all devices for each campus, and offers real-time network visibility, which helps to highlight issues faster.

For example, when rolling out the new equipment, the team quickly discovered that all on-device data was transmitting through only one NIC instead of distributed between two. With Auvik's advanced topography mapping, the team could quickly see the network connections, see the potential issue instantly, and implement a solution. Before Auvik, having visibility into those types of issues just didn't exist. "Auvik is a visual tool that helps me understand where I need to look first, like missing credentials, something is offline, or quickly look up a device IP or the port it is connected to." says Dan Hedgpath, Technology Director.

When considering how to scale to meet growth demands, the IT team at Fulton Public Schools was also looking for ways to complement that with improved network operations and disaster recovery efforts—by implementing automated backups and better documentation.

"Developing our Incident Response Plan, it became evident that we didn't have a good way to back up switch configurations, or to show any changes to those configs when they occur. Auvik made it very simple to do both." says Dan. After implementing Auvik, time saved for the IT team has increased significantly. There is no longer a manual process to record and document the network. There is no time wasted traversing a campus in order to update the firmware on a device. With Auvik, it's as easy as toggling a switch directly from the desktop or looking up an IP for port data on a device on the campus across town. All without ever having to leave the office.



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Solution in Detail

Automated device configuration backups
Creating manual configuration backups for network devices can be time-consuming. Using Auvik's out-of-the-box configuration backups to automate this process allows the network team to get their time back to focus on other priorities.

Faster troubleshooting with real-time visibility
Using Auvik's collector to scan the network and map the topology of the network, the team can now find problems before they become apparent to the end user. And they can do this without leaving their desk. "Prior to Auvik, I would have to identify the devices by IP, SSH into the device and do my work in the CLI. Now, Auvik displays all of that information in the GUI, allows me to run remote commands, and still SSH into the device if I need to. I don't have to remember what a device's IP address is, or use the CLI on the device to find what other switches are connected to it. If I know the MDF Switch I can see all the switches that are connected to it downstream, and can even filter by `type:switches` to see just the switches. Super easy!", says Dan.

Ease of set up, use, and support
The ease of setup and use was a huge factor for the Fulton Public Schools team, and Auvik stands tall against its competitors in this area. "Support experience is good and Auvik is quick to answer any questions. And there is an extensive knowledge base which is helpful getting started."

Some advice from someone who's been there before!



"I think it would have been helpful to ensure that all of my SNMP credentials were consistent on all my devices before adding those devices into Auvik. It can still be done, but would be cleaner if your devices were consistent. Same thing with WMI credentials. Also, if you can break your devices down into smaller subnets and add those subnets into Discovery it would put less strain on the Discovery process. (Example: Class C versus Class B subnet scanning)."

Dan Hedgpath
Technology Director

Business Benefits

Auvik has helped network team members streamline business operations, where it's now easier than ever to find devices, get IPs, update and configure remotely, and backup all device configurations automatically.

Network visibility through mapping, documentation, and real time alerts has also helped to increase time savings for the IT team. By being able to access a tool like Auvik means never having to leave the desk to see what's wrong, or guess the IP address of the device that may exist across town.

Resolving network issues before the end-user is aware is imperative to a high-performing network team.

Getting time back for the IT team—whether that's through better troubleshooting when issues arise or being proactive through monitoring—helps allow the Fulton Public Schools team to focus on more strategic growth initiatives.



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