

COLLEGE SCRAPS PAPER REPORTING: PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS ENJOY STREAMLINED OPERATIONS & FASTER RESPONSE TIMES

» CUSTOMER

St. Olaf College,
Northfield, Minnesota

» CHALLENGE

Bolster data collection to track parking, improve dispatch of emergency services, and streamline the incident reporting process.

» SOLUTION

Omnigo's fully integrated platform to collect and transfer data into an easily searchable database for a complete security operations solution. With its built-in analysis tools, the system helps track incidents, diagnose problems, and proactively identify trends to better protect students. In addition, the system creates a more responsive emergency system and improves parking control for the school.

» RESULTS

By implementing the Omnigo platform, the school has improved communication between the institution, public safety, and the student body. With its capability to connect cars and students to a digital billing system, the system has increased parking ticket revenue and provided an excellent return on investment.

Located an hour south of Minneapolis, Minnesota, St. Olaf College was built on a hill overlooking the town of Northfield. Covering 300 square acres and spanning over 50 buildings including academic facilities and residences, the 3,100+ students and 900 administrators/faculty enjoy peace and low crime relative to other schools. However, the antiquated paper-driven system for parking, incident reporting, and emergency services was becoming burdensome.



St. Olaf College employs the Omnigo platform to help track student behavior and parking violations, create reports, and proactively identify trends, using the software's built-in analysis tools and an easily searchable database.

Referred to Omnigo by colleagues in the higher education industry, managers reviewed four other similar products and chose Omnigo for its easy functionality, data integration, paperless reporting, and affordability, as well as the projected quick return on investment.

Founded in 1874, St. Olaf College was opened to offer liberal arts studies in business, politics, the clergy, and other professions. It remains a top college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and is ranked among the top 60 liberal arts colleges in the United States. The campus is also a favorite destination for local residents who enjoy its well-groomed grounds, facilities, and food options, and often use it for large events and weddings.

The campus is monitored by seven public safety officers in two-person patrols over four shifts. During each patrol, public safety officers utilize two patrol cars equipped with emergency gear, as well as a laptop and tablet using the Omnigo platform. In addition, there are also two public safety captains, a director, 15 student community service officers (CSOs) who also utilize tablets and 30–40 student telephone dispatchers.

“We looked at a lot of similar products and by far Omnigo was the easiest to use, with the lowest learning curve, and the most power and options at the best price point.”

EXCELLENT ROI

Familiar with the previous paper-heavy method, Operations Captain Chad Christiansen helped choose the Omnigo platform and integrate it into the school as the main reporting system. “We would issue warnings, write traffic tickets, and create incident reports in triplicate that would be reviewed by the director and dean,” he recalled. “The reports would be set in a binder and categorized on a shelf. A student could have multiple violations and a pattern of bad behavior and public safety officers would not see the collective picture. The parking system was even less organized, requiring a person to issue a hand-written paper permit and create a report later. Neither system integrated, so a student could have several parking tickets but to see all of the citations was labor intensive. It didn’t work very well.”

Rather than 9-1-1, campus security gets the majority of the calls due to the distance from Northfield. The public safety department has been shown to be more responsive and better at resolving problems specific to the campus, such as larceny (theft and unlocked doors), alcohol-related issues, personal injuries requiring medical attention, and keys being left in cars. When a call comes in, a dispatcher records the information from the caller, inputs it into the Omnigo platform, and relays it to the officer. The responding officer then addresses the situation, communicating times and activities to the dispatcher by radio. Once the issue is resolved, the officer is greeted by a report that is already partially filled out and only requires the addition of details, notes, photos, and corrections, reducing the report writing time by nearly 50%.

“We looked at a lot of similar products and by far Omnigo was the easiest to use, with the lowest learning curve, and the most power and options at the best price point,” Christiansen said. “There was some griping about how paper tickets are faster, but after the officers experienced how easy the system was and how little time they spent on the other end filling out reports, they quickly embraced it.”

Being able to instantly review students’ past behavior has improved communication between the institution, public safety, and the student body. An added benefit has been the drastic increase in parking ticket revenue now that the ticketing system links cars to students and connects to a digital billing system. The integration provided an excellent return on investment and perpetually pays off the use of the platform year after year.

“I have and do recommend Omnigo to all of my colleagues,” Christiansen concluded.

» ST. OLAF COLLEGE

Located in Minnesota overlooking the town of Northfield, the college covers 300 square acres and spans over 50 buildings including academic facilities and residences. Safety of the 3, 100+ students and 900 faculty/staff, plus the thousands of people visiting annually for events and weddings, is one of the highest priorities for administrators.

» OMNIGO SOFTWARE

Omnigo Software is the leading provider of public safety, incident reporting, & security management solutions for law enforcement, education, healthcare, gaming, hospitality, and other enterprises, offering easy-to-use and flexible applications that provide actionable insight for making more informed decisions. Omnigo solutions have helped law enforcement and security professionals increase staff productivity by up to 25%, reduce compliance risk, and show measured improvements in safety and security.