University of Minnesota leverages Sunbird DCIM's digital twin for easier and more collaborative planning

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The Situation

The University of Minnesota (UMN) is a major public research university known for its strong academics and extensive research programs.

To support the diverse IT needs of its students, faculty, researchers, and administrative teams, UMN operates three data centers, 13 core sites, and is in the process of building a new data center. These facilities provide critical IT infrastructure for academic programs, research initiatives, and university-wide operations.

Initially, they relied on spreadsheets and open source DCIM software, but when managing their data center infrastructure became increasingly difficult, they deployed Sunbird DCIM for a more modern solution.

The Solution

Sunbird provides UMN with a single pane of glass and digital twin for all their infrastructure and IT assets across all their sites.

"I maintain the data in the DCIM tool. I started it from scratch, implemented it, and now grow with it," said Gregory Tietz, Data Center Infrastructure Administrator. "Sunbird is a lot easier to use [than our previous tool], and it's grown considerably since we bought it and I used it the first time."

UMN primarily uses Sunbird DCIM for asset tracking, cable management, and power management, and heavily leverages the digital twin visualization.

"We use the visualization so we can show at different meetings where we're at with the new data center and what it looks like," said Tietz.

(continued)

> **"Sunbird is a lot easier to use [than our previous tool]."**

Gregory Tietz | Data Center Infrastructure Administrator
University of Minnesota

Customer	The University of Minnesota (UMN) is a major public research university known for its strong academics and extensive research programs.
Situation	Managing their data centers with spreadsheets and open source DCIM software became too manual and time-consuming.
Solution	UMN deployed Sunbird DCIM for a single pane of glass and digital twin for all their data center infrastructure.
Results	With Sunbird, UMN achieved a 42% reduction in rack count for their data center consolidation, 50% less time spent managing users, easier and more collaborative technology refreshes, and streamlines asset lifecycle management.

University of Minnesota leverages Sunbird DCIM's digital twin for easier and more collaborative planning

The visualization capabilities also enhance communication and collaboration to make planning faster and easier.

"I can show a customer, 'This is what you have.' Before, the customer didn't even know what they had," said Tietz. "Now I can say to them, 'You have all these devices. What are you doing with them and do they need to be there?'"

This visibility has transformed how teams make decisions. "A lot of people forget they have equipment in the data center if they're not using it," said Tietz. "The biggest change is just being able to show, 'This is what equipment you have,' so they don't forget."

Since different colleges within UMN purchase their own equipment, keeping track of assets is crucial.

"We house all this information to house all their equipment," said Tietz. "It's all the colleges that are buying the equipment. They come to us and they might say, 'We're thinking of this or that,' but we're not involved with purchasing until it actually has been bought."

In meetings with stakeholders, the tool provides clear insights and helps guide decision-making.

"If we're talking about a certain rack, I can pull that rack up and go, 'You have X amount in your racks right now, and we only have this amount of space. What is your projection going forward because we need to know to be able to plan where we're going to put your equipment,'" said Tietz.

"We can show them directly right away, 'This is what we've got, and this is what's going on,'" Tietz added. "All parties involve know what's going on because they can actually see something. We have something to give them."

After seven years with Sunbird, Tietz remains a highly satisfied customer.

"I've had no problems with Sunbird," said Tietz. "I like all the people I've talked to or worked with. Everything gets done in a reasonable manner. All the people at Sunbird are great and easy to work with."

> "*Using DCIM to start planning out our new data center has been a lot easier. We can know how many racks we're going to need based on the space we have now and how many RUs we currently have.*"
>
> Gregory Tietz
> Data Center Infrastructure Administrator
> **University of Minnesota**

University of Minnesota leverages Sunbird DCIM's digital twin for easier and more collaborative planning

M

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The Results

42% Reduction in Rack Count for New Data Center

Leveraging data from Sunbird DCIM, UMN is consolidating two data centers into one new facility and reducing their rack count by 42%. "Using DCIM to start planning out our new data center has been a lot easier. We can know how many racks we're going to need based on the space we have now and how many RUs we currently have," said Tietz.
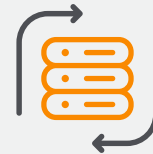
50% Less Time Spent Managing Users

UMN integrated dcTrack with Grouper to simplify user management and role-based access control. "The integration reduces a lot of the administrative tasks," said Tietz, highlighting the time savings for adding and keeping track of users and estimating that they spend half the time they used to managing users.

Easier Technology Refreshes with Data-Driven Collaboration Across Teams

"Refreshes are a lot easier because the customers know what they have," said Tietz. "It's a lot more collaborative with who we are working with. The conversations are a lot easier because there's a lot more data and information to give them, and for us to already have to go forward with."

Streamlined Asset Lifecycle Management

At a customer user group meeting, Sunbird presented how to scan assets into dcTrack as they arrive on the dock to get them into inventory. "That was a different way to look at it, but it actually does make it a lot easier," said Tietz. "A lot of the team has started to implement doing it this way. This process has been a lot better to use."

Call 732.993.4476 or visit SunbirdDCIM.com

Sunbird Software is changing the way data centers are being managed. With a focus on real user scenarios for real customer problems, we help data center operators manage tasks and processes faster and more efficient than ever before, while saving costs and improving availability. We strive to eliminate the complexity they have been forced to accept from point tools and home grown applications, removing the dependency on emails and spreadsheets to transform the delivery of data center services. Sunbird delivers on this commitment with unexpected simplicity through products that are easy to find, buy, deploy, use, and maintain. Our solutions are rooted in our deep connections with our customers who share best practices and participate in our user groups and product development process.

Based in Piscataway, NJ, Sunbird serves over 2,000 DCIM customers worldwide. For more information, please visit SunbirdDCIM.com.