



## CASE STUDY

# Winnipeg School Division Modernizes While Simplifying Network Infrastructure with Infoblox

## THE CUSTOMER - WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

Winnipeg School Division is the largest of six public school divisions in Winnipeg, the capital and largest city of Manitoba in south central Canada.

Its large network serves approximately 40,000 students enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade and spans across 79 schools located in 91 separate buildings. Winnipeg School Division's IT team is responsible for managing the entire, massive network infrastructure and for keeping all network devices, applications, and services up and running at all times. It is also responsible for supporting the security and academic success of its 40,000 users online.

Kevin Druet, Senior Systems Administrator and leader of the IT team for Winnipeg School Division, is an IT veteran and expert user of Infoblox solutions for the past decade and counting. He understands better than most how to establish a solid foundation for managing large education networks efficiently and securely.

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**Kevin Druet**  
Senior Systems Administrator  
Winnipeg School Division

## THE CHALLENGE

### Achieving Simpler Management of Core Network Services

Winnipeg's IT team identified the need to develop a foundation for managing its core networking applications and services and for adapting to rapidly evolving network landscapes and government regulations.

## THE SOLUTION

### Addressing Business Requirements And Support Needs

Winnipeg School Division initially considered multiple competing vendors that would meet customer needs and support corporate initiatives. The team considered a local Canadian vendor that claimed similar specs and capabilities to Infoblox. However, after Winnipeg underwent a Proof of Concept (PoC) with the competing vendor, the customer learned quickly that the competing

solution was unable to resolve the customer's pain points. Even at the beginning of the PoC, Druet recalls that, "In the morning, during the morning rush, it would tank itself. It just couldn't handle the DHCP."

When considering Infoblox, Winnipeg contacted Infoblox Customer Care in order to determine whether Infoblox could provide sufficient, timely support and a high-quality customer experience. Upon contacting Infoblox for support as a test, it was able to quickly reach a representative who demonstrated expertise of the District's implementation. "Support for me sells the Infoblox product," Druet insists. "Customer Care knew exactly what to do in order to fix the problem right away."

"We needed a simpler way to run more centralized and appliance-based DHCP with ease," Druet explains. DHCP plays an integral role in assigning IP addresses to network devices, which are critical elements of any network, especially distributed ones. Every single application and device on a network has an IP address assigned to it and cannot be accessed without one.

Each of Winnipeg's 91 networked buildings across the school division initially had its own set of unique devices and DHCP servers, name servers, and file servers. Managing those systems separately became increasingly cumbersome, and this strategy was not a sustainable or secure enough solution to position the network for the future.

## THE RESULTS

### Network Reliability as the Cornerstone of Any Network

For Winnipeg School Division, network reliability is a critical component of how to facilitate the education and success of all students and users alike. "That's the cornerstone of the network, because without it, nothing works," says Druet. The failover features that are built into the Infoblox Grid, along with the durability of NIOS DDI appliances, provide the highest level of reliability and availability required to keep the evolving network up and running at all times for its 40,000+ students and guests. "Our Infoblox hardware is very reliable," Druet says. "We've never had a failed upgrade, and we've never ever had to phone tech support."

The IT team members now benefit from the freedom to upgrade network services and applications when it is convenient for them. They also benefit from peace of mind knowing all services will remain up and running even during peak hours when schools are in session. Winnipeg's IT team can also spend more time managing more urgent tasks, such as supporting users, and can spend less time worrying whether the setup will work properly.

After almost a decade of successful network management as a veteran Infoblox customer and expert user, Winnipeg School Division will continue to commit to its current Infoblox implementation. The IT team is already looking to the future and working to adapt to today's rapidly evolving network and threat landscape driven by cybersecurity, Internet of Things (IoT), IPv6 adoption, and other trends.

Winnipeg is considering its options for scaling to future growth and digital transformation, including potentially moving to a data center housed at a new location and exploring the possibility of managing its network in the cloud.

In fact, the move to an Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) provider has already begun. Winnipeg School Division will likely move from an appliance to a remote site or run Infoblox virtual machines at its new site.

**Customer:** Winnipeg School Division  
**Industry:** Education  
**Location:** Winnipeg, Canada

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Adopt sustainable solution for managing distributed network services
- Adapt faster to evolving government regulations
- Receive sufficient, timely customer support

#### RESULTS:

- Solid DDI foundation for large, distributed network
- Highest level of reliability and availability
- Centralized network management

#### PRODUCTS:

- NIOS DDI



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**Corporate Headquarters**  
2390 Mission College Blvd, Ste. 501  
Santa Clara, CA 95054

+1.408.986.4000  
[www.infoblox.com](http://www.infoblox.com)