



I felt like we had great help every step of the way, and that we weren't just being 'sold'. We worked together with our partners at NETGEAR and came up with a unique design to fit our customer's specific needs.

Tom Bonavita, Owner  
GoodLife Communications

**CUSTOMER NAME:**  
Charleston Charter School for Math and Science

**SIZE:** 600+ Students

**INDUSTRY:** K-12 Education

**COMPANY WEBSITE:**  
[www.charlestonmathscience.org](http://www.charlestonmathscience.org)

**GEOGRAPHIC REGION:**  
Charleston, SC

**PARTNER NAME:**  
GoodLife Communications

**INDUSTRY:** IT Services and Consulting

**COMPANY WEBSITE:**  
[www.goodlifecom munications.com](http://www.goodlifecom munications.com)

**GEOGRAPHIC REGION:**  
Charleston, SC

## CASE STUDY: IT SERVICES AND CONSULTING

### CHARTER SCHOOL GIVES HIGH PERFORMANCE MARKS TO NETGEAR® MANAGED SWITCHES

#### BACKGROUND

GoodLife Communications has been serving the Charleston, South Carolina area since 2008 with a broad range of network services, including data, voice, wireless, and video. Over the years, the company's outstanding reputation for quality, reliability, and customer advocacy has driven and supported its success and growth, based on repeat and referral business. This is particularly prevalent with area schools, a close-knit community that accounts for nearly 60 percent of the company's revenue. So when the traffic management challenges of Charleston Math and Science, one of the premier public charter schools in the state reached a critical level, the school's IT Director contacted GoodLife Communications for assistance.

#### PROBLEM/OBJECTIVE

##### AGING INFRASTRUCTURE UNABLE TO SUPPORT GROWING DEMAND

Charleston Math and Science had been using Cisco Catalyst managed switches for its network backbone. While those switches adequately served the school's needs when the initial purchase was made, they were unable to keep pace with the school's growing network needs. Network performance and reliability had become major issues, and the increasing cost of the Cisco SmartNET service contract created a financial burden for the school's limited IT budget. "This is a technology-based school with more than 600 middle and high school students," says Tom Bonavita, owner of GoodLife Communications. "Multiple devices for every student and teacher, continuous content downloads and video streaming to support learning objectives, smart boards in every classroom, 50 IP cameras, and VoIP communications puts a major strain on the infrastructure. Classes begin at 8:00am, and by 8:05am the network was crippled."

Tom also faced significant business hurdles with this project. The school is part of the county school district and is therefore beholden to the district's purchasing rules. Cisco was the preferred vendor, so the decision to use different equipment had to be based on more than just price; it had to work better. GoodLife Communications investigated the Cisco solution, but the cost was twice the school's allocated budget for the project. Similarly, an HP ProCurve solution was also too expensive. Tom knew that in addition to fitting the school's budget, the solution would also have to be technically superior. "If we didn't implement it correctly, we would be run out of the district, and maybe out of public schools across the state," says Tom. "Schools represent 60 percent of our revenue, so getting this right was absolutely critical to our business. Our reputation was on the line, so we couldn't go with a 'cheap' alternative; it had to be high quality, and it had to work better."

[www.netgear.com](http://www.netgear.com)



## SOLUTION

### NETGEAR® M4300 ACHIEVES MORE FOR LESS

After careful consideration of the options, GoodLife Communications was able to design a solution that would fit all of the customer's needs while fitting within their budget. "We had to support 1,000 Ethernet drops and more than 800 simultaneous wireless devices, so a port failure can take out 400 clients," says Tom.

After consulting with NETGEAR technical experts, Tom recommended a solution based on NETGEAR M4300 managed switches, featuring two 10-Gigabit M4300-24X24F switches at the core and multiple M4300-52G-POE+ and M4300-28G-POE+ switches to power IP cameras, VoIP phones, and wireless access points. With full Power over Ethernet (PoE) and 10G stacking capabilities, advanced high availability (HA) with hitless failover, and scalability to fit a broad range of performance needs, the M4300 delivers the performance, redundancy and ease of use the school requires, at a price they can afford. "At the completion of our research, it was a no-brainer," says Tom. "The HP solution cost significantly more than NETGEAR, and Cisco came in at double the cost for the same functionality. Buying NETGEAR, the school can use the money it saved to purchase flat panels, wireless devices, and other technology items that can help maximize the learning experience for students."

## RESULTS

### NETGEAR IS A TRUSTED PARTNER

"The customer couldn't afford true redundancy in the form of active/backup at every node," says Tom. "But working with NETGEAR and utilizing its unique 10G/1G mixed stacking, we were able to come up with a modified spine and leaf ring topology design to avoid a single point of failure. The network backbone based off of the M4300's made a great solution that I am really proud of."

Tom credits NETGEAR's presales support with much of the success of this project. "They were terrific and very helpful," says Tom. "I felt like we had great help every step of the way, and that we weren't just being 'sold'. We worked together with our partners at NETGEAR and came up with a unique design to fit our customer's specific needs. That's the true value for me; that I feel 100 percent confident that I have the right product, the best pricing, and the right solution for this customer."

Following his experience with NETGEAR, Tom has a new credo. "It's Ethernet. If you want to pay double for those 1's and 0's to pop out in the exact same way, it's up to you. It's almost foolish to pay that much."



M4300

[www.netgear.com](http://www.netgear.com)

NETGEAR, the NETGEAR logo, Connect with Innovation, and are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of NETGEAR, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries in the United States and/or other countries. Other brand names mentioned herein are for identification purposes only and may be trademarks of their respective holder(s). Information is subject to change without notice © 2016 NETGEAR, Inc. All rights reserved.

CASE STUDY:  
GoodLife Communications

T: 1-408-907-8000, E: [sales@netgear.com](mailto:sales@netgear.com), Technical support: 1-888-NETGEAR