The university’s student body growth, coupled with the expansion of online learning applications and tools required to support those students, resulted in a challenge faced by institutions around the world: overburdened resources and budget constraints.

In the spring of 2011, the university decided that it was time to take action.

Building the “Case”

“We knew we wanted to migrate to Blackboard Learn, Release 9.1—and that we’d need Blackboard Managed Hosting to help manage it,” says Phil O’Hara, Associate Director of Academic Services at Dalhousie. “But we needed a defensible business case to do so.”

“Previously, we didn’t even have the option to consider Blackboard Managed Hosting,” continues O’Hara. “Canada’s federal legislation prevents private student data from being housed outside of the country, so our options were...
limited.” But once the data center opened in Calgary in 2011, the university recognized an opportunity to explore a strategic partnership.

To develop the business case, the university extrapolated its growth for the next five years, and then estimated the number of resources they’d need to support it. They looked at both the hard and soft costs to hone in on the total cost of ownership.

Included in the predictable hard costs were:

- Hardware
- Disk space
- Back-ups
- Out-of-the-box Oracle licensing

And in the soft costs were resources dedicated to the:

- Network team
- Database group
- Day-to-day operations management (including installs, patches and updates)

Next, Dalhousie needed to assess the Managed Hosting solution.

Weighing the Hidden Pros

To fully assess the total cost of ownership, Dalhousie considered the full package of features that Blackboard Managed Hosting provided that the university itself wouldn’t be able to afford on its own:

- Round-the-clock support
- Level of advanced technology and tools
- Redundancy
- Database size
- Full enterprise Oracle licenses
- Level of security
- Predictive analysis and incident prevention
An increasingly critical component was database size. With the continued integration of rich media into course sections, the management of large files—including back-ups—was beginning to become an issue. The university needed a scalable solution that would enable it to seamlessly manage the growth of content-rich files.

“When you factor in the investments needed to deliver the level of service and technology that Blackboard provides, our total cost of ownership to match it goes up exponentially,” explains O’Hara. “With Managed Hosting, we estimate that we’ll save approximately $250,000 over the course of five years.”

And so the business case was made. In January of 2012, Dalhousie officially made the move to Blackboard Managed Hosting.

Making an Impact
After moving to a managed hosting solution, the university was able to redirect valuable resources to other projects that had been on the back-burner. “We’ve been able to turn the team’s talents to other things now, including SharePoint and Citrix projects,” says O’Hara. “And we can also focus on being more responsible with the data, like ensuring that rich media content used in courses is copyright-clear.”

Dalhousie rests assured that it has a strategic partner in Blackboard Managed Hosting—one that will help the university achieve its mission for differentiation, excellence, focus and flexibility.

Learn More
To learn more about Blackboard Managed Hosting, visit blackboard.com/managedhosting or contact your sales rep.
BLACKBOARD MANAGED HOSTING ENGAGEMENT PLANS

Engagement Plans are designed to support your online programs today, and their growth over time. The Plans use an unparalleled core technology platform, with progressive levels of service level, capacity and capability:

**SILVER**
For small institutions or departments experiencing initial organic online program growth - Fast, easy and effective 24x7 hosting from experts who know the application

**GOLD**
For medium-sized and larger institutions whose online learning programs are maturing - Cost-effective 24x7 production infrastructure with the incremental addition of technology components when required

**PLATINUM**
For institutions with a structured and mature online education strategy - Complete hosting infrastructure, higher service level, and additional project management for critical changes

**DIAMOND**
For institutions whose online learning programs are at the core of their educational mission - Partnership to manage fast growth and change with the highest levels of support and strategic planning

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**RISK MANAGEMENT & BEST PRACTICES**

Infrastructure and Support Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>24x7x365 Operations and Support</th>
<th>Tier-4 Data Center</th>
<th>Tier-1 Redundant Internet Connections</th>
<th>Redundant Data Backups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*The 99.9% SLA is available for institutions upgrading to Release 9.1, who currently have or plan to move to the Platinum Level Service or higher, subject to meeting Best Practice Requirements; Restrictions apply. All qualifications must be met. Requires execution of the 99.9% SLA Addendum to the Blackboard Managed Hosting contract.*