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Client Success Story

Berry College's Digital Transformation Journey is a Masterclass in Proactive and Efficient Facilities Asset Management

Client

Berry College

Location

Mount Berry, Georgia

Vitals

A historically significant private college with:

- One of the largest contiguous college campuses in the world

- Approximately 2,100 students

- 127 buildings across a 27,000-acre campus

Results

Implementing Brightly software, Berry College:

- Achieved 100% facilities staff adoption rate of Brightly's Asset Essentials and used data to justify hiring a new full-time employee.

- Streamlined inventory management, resulting in better warehouse utilization and budget accountability

- Shifted to more proactive maintenance with a goal to convert most work orders from reactive to preventive.

- Leveraged the mobile app to generate work orders, reducing downtime and paperwork.

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Background

Before implementing Brightly's Asset Essentials, Berry College's previous system lacked the flexibility, mobile access, and comprehensive asset visibility needed to efficiently manage such a vast campus. Maintenance operations were largely reactive, inventory and space management were inefficient, and work order processes were manual and paper based.

Leah Cobb, the Director of Auxiliary Initiatives & Partnerships, took on the pivotal role driving the transformation, particularly for auxiliary buildings like the campus faculty and staff housing. Her operations-minded approach, coupled with George Cummings' leadership of the facility staff, highlighted the need for a modern, mobile-enabled, and asset-centric solution to streamline operations, enhance reporting, and support data-driven decisions across the entire campus.

Good data and strong leaders

Asset Essentials has fundamentally transformed Berry College's asset management processes. The college began by leveraging both internal and external Facilities Condition Assessments (FCAs) to establish a baseline for all assets. This foundational data was then meticulously input into Asset Essentials, providing asset-level insights and a clear starting point for comprehensive asset management.

Asset Essentials was rolled out slowly from 2024 to 2025, with ongoing data input and refinement as more detailed asset information became available. The system was configured to support a campus-wide approach for consistency and strategic alignment across all departments.

Recognizing the potential for resistance to digital innovation, Berry College implemented a thoughtful change-management strategy. They purchased tablets for all staff and provided a "sandbox" environment for six months of familiarization and play. Repeated training sessions and conversations highlighted the benefits of documentation and data capture, with gatekeepers assigned to oversee data quality.

Under Cobb and Cummings' leadership, the implementation followed a detailed timeline, kicking off in October 2024 and with the eventual campus-wide deployment in August 2025. This deliberate approach ensured staff readiness and system stability before broader adoption. Cobb and Cummings' ability to articulate long-term vision and manage the transition effectively resulted in strong buy-in and a successful deployment, obtaining a 100% adoption rate.

> Asset Essentials has been a game-changer for us. It's not just about managing assets. It's about transforming our operations, empowering our staff with better tools, and making smarter, data-driven decisions for our vast campus. The efficiency gains and improved planning capabilities are truly invaluable.

Leah Cobb
Director of Auxiliary Initiatives & Partnerships, Berry College

Real-time visibility for better decisions

Brightly's asset management software has provided Berry College with rich data that allows Cobb and Cummings to make more-informed decisions. By analyzing data and gathering insights, Berry College was able to identify a need for a student-facing staff member to work in tandem with facilities staff and residence life, leading to the hiring of a new staff member.

Asset Essentials provides the ability to quickly review costs for each site and location, allowing the team to drill down and understand specific needs, such as whether HVAC or carpentry demands are higher for a particular area. "Being able to analyze data in real time is providing us the opportunity to discuss what makes sense in terms of KPIs and if they should be the same for each shop," Cobb says.

The system also offers a clearer understanding of the types of work being performed – for example preventive maintenance (PM), routine maintenance, or special requests – for workforce planning and optimizing the number of work orders.

The Asset Essentials mobile app has facilitated more precise and complete data capture. Technicians across the expansive campus can now access work orders, parts information, and essential operation and maintenance manuals directly in the field. Mobile capability has drastically decreased response times for maintenance requests and significantly increased overall customer satisfaction within the campus community.

From a reactive to a proactive culture

With Brightly's help, Berry College has begun the transition from primarily reactive to proactive maintenance, with a goal of converting most work orders from reactive responses to planned preventive actions, which helps to extend asset longevity, reduce unexpected equipment failures, and adjust schedules based on historical data and asset condition.

The transition to a digital Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system has substantially reduced the administrative burden associated with manual, paper-based work orders. As a result, Berry College has eliminated countless hours previously spent on processing physical forms, returning to offices for updates, and making follow-up calls. These major efficiency gains have freed up staff to focus on more critical maintenance tasks and operational initiatives.

Looking forward

Berry College's transformation with Asset Essentials is envisioned as a multi-year process. The college plans for ongoing enhancements as the system matures, with future phases to include additional Brightly products, such as Origin.

The idea is to continuously leverage robust data and expand system functionalities to further optimize demand versus capacity, refine preventive maintenance, and enhance operational efficiency, ensuring the long-term sustainability of campus facilities.

Learn more: BrightlySoftware.com

> "
> It's kind of like taking your vitamins, you don't know how beneficial they are until you stop taking them.

Leah Cobb
Director of Auxiliary Initiatives & Partnerships, Berry College

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