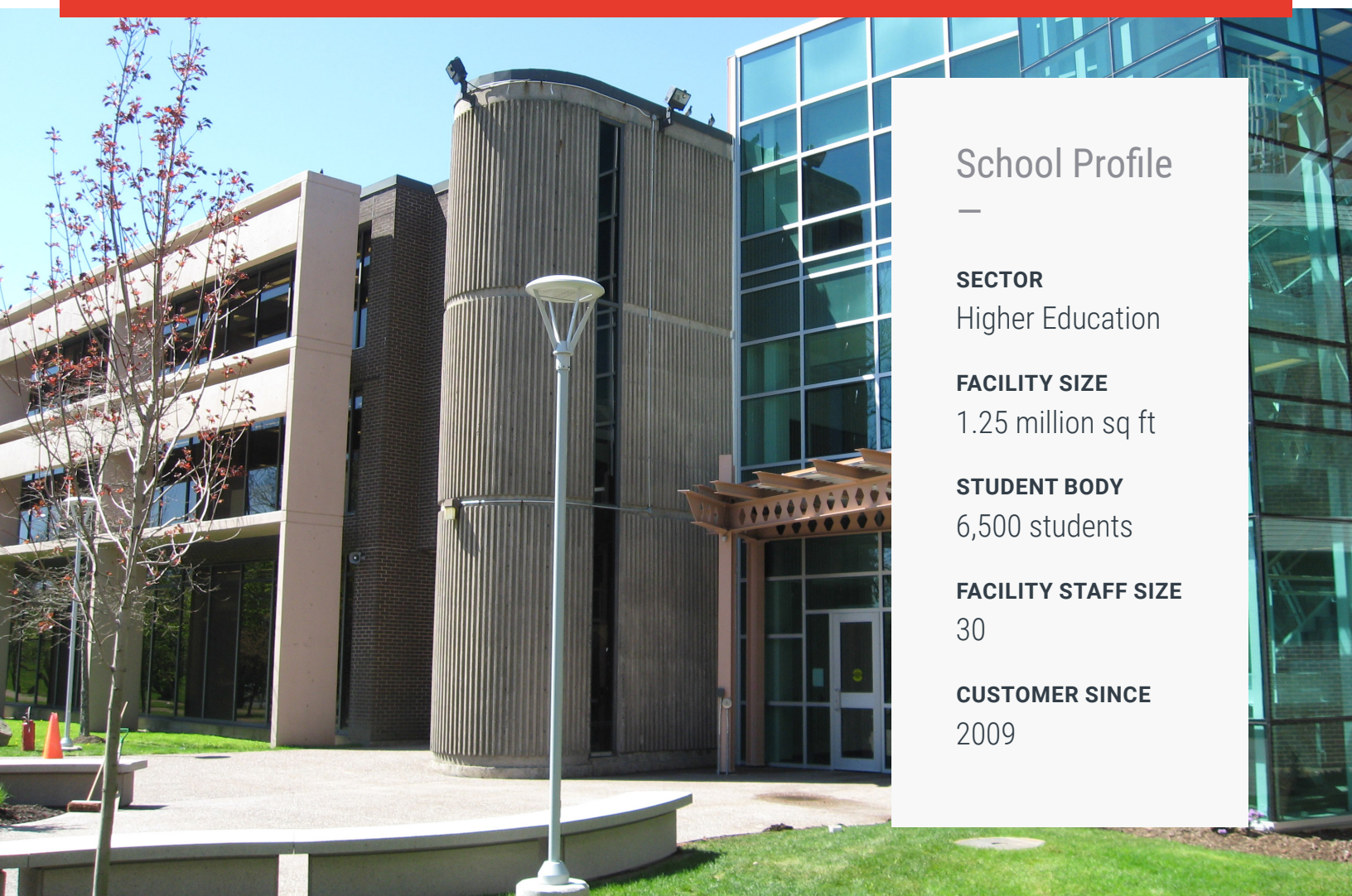


St. Mary's University

Halifax, Nova Scotia



School Profile

SECTOR

Higher Education

FACILITY SIZE

1.25 million sq ft

STUDENT BODY

6,500 students

FACILITY STAFF SIZE

30

CUSTOMER SINCE

2009



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Making The Switch To A Computerized System

Switching to a computer-based system for managing facility work has many immediate benefits. Work orders are more easily submitted, tracked, and completed. Plus, a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) can significantly help shore up assets so that a stretched facility team's resources are better applied.

Although going digital is an important step towards becoming more efficient, it's only the first step. The improved work flow and use of resources that come with a CMMS are

sometimes over shadowed by new problems, such as working with a complicated interface or needing the help of specialists to fulfill basic tasks in the system.

St. Mary's University, a small-to-mid-sized institution of higher education in Halifax, Nova Scotia, had this very experience before partnering with Q Ware to support their facility maintenance management needs.

Why St. Mary's Made The Switch

Gary Schmeisser is Senior Director of Facilities Management at St. Mary's. He first discovered our CMMS solution at a ERAPPA (Eastern Region of APPA: Leadership in Educational Facilities) conference. After trying out a demo of our system, he made the decision to adopt Q Ware at St. Mary's in 2009.

One reason Gary made the switch comes down to how well our system works with small-to-mid-sized campuses.

A university's real estate size is a major factor in determining how they tackle their facility maintenance work process. At about 1.25 million square feet, St. Mary's campus is smaller than the average campus size in Canada and the United States.

The original CMMS at St. Mary's was difficult for staff to use. Setting up new users required a lot of time and money for training and support. Additionally, outside technical consultants were regularly required to assist with routine tasks.

Statistics

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"Q Ware grows with our needs. We didn't feel like we were left standing alone after the system was implemented."

Adapting To A Self-Directed Work Structure

With just over 30 staff members, Gary is able to keep St. Mary's facility maintenance running smoothly by utilizing a self-directed work group model. A self-directed work group approach to facility maintenance is an excellent way to streamline management resources and work flow.

"There's no planner, no supervisor," Gary explained in an interview. "We like the self-directed work model because it's very efficient and cost-effective."

Since St. Mary's relies entirely on the self-directed work model for maintenance work outside of grounds and custodial services, it's critical that any CMMS that's brought on board can support it. The system that was in place when Gary first joined St. Mary's, however, was unable to do that. Work orders all went to the same place, which meant that the job of submitting requests to the specific trade groups had to be done manually, which caused a series of inefficiencies.

How Self-Directed Work Groups Work

Work groups are independent teams within a maintenance organization that manage and do the work for requests requiring their unique expertise.

Ex. Plumbing work group





Making It As Easy To Use As Possible

When we learned how important the self-directed work model was to how St. Mary's Facilities Department operated, we worked closely with Gary to design a customized CMMS solution to support it. The result was a cloud-based system that made assigning work orders to unique trade group buckets easy.

"I definitely think that anyone can use it. It's very user friendly," LoffieAnn Downey explained when we spoke to her about using our system. LoffieAnn is the Secretary for Facilities Management at St. Mary's and she frequently interacts with the university's staff regarding facility repairs and maintenance around the campus. It's her job to process work requests

and assign them to the appropriate trade group or maintenance department member.

LoffieAnn thinks the platform works so well because of Q Ware's key user feature, which allows facility managers to create unique accounts for different personnel. Those key users are then able to log into their account via the Q Ware web application login to check in on the status of their work request.

"Staff members can track work orders, see what the progress is on one they've submitted. It makes it easy for them to find out where our department is in regards to their work request," she said. "It helps avoid a lot of frustration."

From-the-ground-up

At C&S Companies, we think a “one size fits all” attitude towards CMMS design and installation just doesn’t work. Our Q Ware solution starts with a facility’s unique needs and grows from there. We believe that customers like St. Mary’s appreciate this for one very simple reason: They’re able to do what they do best with less wasted resources and fewer headaches.

“I definitely think that anyone can use it. It’s very user friendly.”

—**LoffieAnne Downey**, Secretary for Facilities Management

Maintain Excellence

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