



SIMPLIFIED TECHNOLOGY. SUPERIOR RESULTS.™

# School Buses Case Study

## **Student Transportation Inc.**

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Student Transportation Inc. (STI) is North America's largest independent provider of school bus transportation services, operating more than 13,000 vehicles in over 360 school districts. STI services are delivered by drivers, dispatchers, maintenance technicians, terminal managers, and other caring members of their riders' community. Operations are managed by highly-qualified, experienced national and regional teams of transportation experts who average more than 25 years of experience in the industry, combining the best of both worlds, bringing national economies of scale to local operations.

## Immediate Improvement

"The first thing we saw was an immediate improvement in a lot of customer service areas," observes Keith Engelbert, Chief Technology Officer for Student Transportation, Inc. (STI). "Much better response and reaction time with day-to-day tickets. And larger things that used to take six months now take six days."

After eleven years of working together, STI's service provider had been acquired by Synoptek. Engelbert is quick to note that their Client Advisor had come along with

their previous provider as part of the acquisition. "His coming over to Synoptek gave him more ability to do much more for us, with far more resources."

## A Whole New Level

"Synoptek has taken us to another level, explains Engelbert. "We have lots of projects going on at any given time, with many 'balls in the air'. Synoptek has a much deeper resource set than we had been accustomed to. They're not just hosting our data and our Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) needs. We're leaning on their Managed Service group to help us find a whole new finance system. This is a really big deal for us."

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Engelbert refers to the fact that STI has been on the same finance system for 11 years, way overdue for an upgrade. Given that they had limited experience evaluating potential replacements, STI pursued several potential resources to help them choose. The approach they found most appropriate and useful was the Synoptek Enterprise Application Environment Assessment. In addition to collecting and analyzing all of the pertinent data needed to make an effective selection, Keith Engelbert points out that the process gave them much food for thought regarding other ways in which they could improve operations.

“After interviewing many firms,” says Engelbert, “we realized that none of them were going to be very objective about which financial system was best for us. We wanted to work with someone who would be completely agnostic, and that’s why we went with Synoptek.”

## Compliance Concerns

“I’m finally getting back to a happy place on the compliance side,” acknowledges Keith Engelbert. “One of the most important factors in our relationship comes

from being able to confidently put Synoptek on the phone with our auditors.”

Since STI is a publicly traded company, and is responsible for the safe transport of hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren, regulatory compliance is of particular importance. As with most public companies, STI must always be prepared for monthly, quarterly, and annual audits. “One thing we were very impressed with,” adds Engelbert, “is how Synoptek views the compliance side. They have extensive dedicated resources with deep expertise in regulatory compliance. This puts them miles above their competition.”

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**Synoptek is there**  
every step of the  
way



## The Importance of Support

“A big part of my strategy,” points out Engelbert, “is how I support deploy and support my cloud environment.” With 1500 users to support and only 5 people on staff to support them, Synoptek is seen as the best strategy to assure constant support for all of his users.

In addition to the ongoing user support requirements, the STI team is in the midst of a very large server-version migration from Windows Server 2008 to a more current version, a project Engelbert refers to as a “big heavy lift.” They also have

extensive work going on in their Microsoft Exchange environment, moving to a newer version and transitioning from their current shared environment to a private domain.

“There’s a ton going on with Exchange,” exclaims Engelbert, noting that the Synoptek team has allowed his team to do a lot more that they’ve wanted to do for 7-10 years, including legal retention issues which require them to provide inboxes in .pst files and other key compliance issues.

“That’s a huge piece of the puzzle here on the support side,” concludes Engelbert. “It’s like “out-of-sight-out-of-mind, people don’t see it so they don’t connect the dots.”

What’s this ‘huge piece’ he’s talking about? “We’ve got Synoptek on speed dial waiting to help us with whatever we need.”



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