

# New York Schools Save Money with Energy Management Solution



Lower Hudson Regional Information Center deploys Cisco® energy management tool to save money while connecting education.

## Executive Summary

### Lower Hudson Regional Information Center

- **Industry:** Education
- **Location:** Harrison, New York
- **Number of Employees:** 175

### CHALLENGE

- Need to help schools save money amid declining budgets while employing technology-based education
- Desire to promote regional information centers as leaders and partners in connected education
- Desire to increase transparency across a large, multischool network

### SOLUTION

- Deployed Cisco Energy Management Suite to save energy and money at schools around the region.

### RESULTS

- Realized energy savings of up to 60 percent for schools throughout the region
- Decreased energy costs for schools due to both IT and non-IT-related energy consumption control
- Increased network transparency, allowing schools to better make financial decisions

## Challenge

The Lower Hudson Regional Information Center (LHRIC) is a nonprofit consortium that provides educational and administrative technology services to 62 school districts in Westchester, Putnam, and Rockland Counties of New York state. One of LHRIC's goals is to control and reduce—in whatever way possible—costs specifically relating to IT and education technology. The information center offers services that schools could not otherwise provide due to budget concerns, time constraints, and staffing.

The Lower Hudson Valley area is an academically competitive region with consistently high test scores. As such, the schools in these counties understand the value of new types of technology-based learning. Additionally, these schools are hyperfocused on meeting the goals of 21st century learning, that is, ways to advance education for students in a connected, digital world. Due to the expectations in the region, LHRIC's services are in high demand; the information center works with more than 225,000 students in roughly 300 buildings in the state.

In 2014, LHRIC began to evaluate ways to assist in promoting regional information centers (RICs) as educational leaders in New York and set a goal to help its schools save even more money. Additionally, as a consortium, LHRIC hoped to bring more transparency and visibility to management services for schools in the Lower Hudson Valley. This increased transparency in individual schools would allow for more effective decision-making from education leaders.

That same year, LHRIC invited technology providers to its information center for briefings on financial, energy, and personnel savings. While onsite, Cisco discovered that LHRIC and its schools had multiple devices that were running around the clock, and there was little or no oversight of energy consumption. As a result, both the schools' and LHRIC's energy bills were increasing. The information center decided to engage Cisco for a more powerful and streamlined way to save money and create further value.

## Solution

To address LHRIC's goals, Cisco presented its energy management solution to the information center. Cisco Energy Management Suite is a combination of software and services that help organizations measure and manage the energy used by connected devices across the network. What makes Energy Management Suite different from other energy management tools is that it is agentless, that is, the software does not sit on the end device, but on a server. This alignment means that one person can manage Energy Management Suite both simply and comprehensively.

Energy Management Suite also provides a complete inventory of every IT device that customers have, giving end users greater visibility into their networks. Using Energy Management Suite, customers can see how much their organizations can save in the short and long term, as well as its savings compared to competitors.

# New York Schools Save Money with Energy Management Solution



Lower Hudson Regional Information Center deploys Cisco® energy management tool to save money while connecting education.

“I wanted to ... look for new ways to help the district reduce energy consumption, and it seemed like bringing in a new type of management solution could be a perfect answer.”

---

**Dr. Dennis Lauro**  
Executive Director,  
Lower Hudson Regional Information Center

At first the LHRIC IT team was skeptical of Energy Management Suite, because most schools were already using alternative energy management products. However, Cisco highlighted the differentiation—specifically the agentless factor—and how Energy Management Suite can help school districts expand on what they are currently doing.

Dr. Dennis Lauro, the executive director of LHRIC, was the driving force behind the decision to try out Energy Management Suite. As a retired superintendent from Westchester County, he was enthusiastic about organizational change. “I wanted to be proactive and look for new ways to help the district reduce energy consumption, and it seemed like bringing in a new type of management solution could be a perfect answer,” says Dr. Lauro.

LHRIC ran a 45-day pilot program with Cisco and Energy Management Suite beginning in January 2015, and the team quickly realized the success of the solution, as well as the positive ROI. “When we started to gather steam, we looked at projections of savings in the future,” says Dr. Lauro. “We saw a projection of \$1 million in savings over time. Little by little, the ground swell had started.”

Because LHRIC’s schools used different methods (and solutions) when it came to energy and technology management, the schools were attracted to how efficiently Energy Management Suite ran in their buildings. The comprehensive evaluation of solutions and products that Energy Management Suite provided helped Cisco to beat the competition.

As a nonprofit organization, LHRIC was also attracted to the Cisco Capital® role in financing Energy Management Suite over a 5-year period at zero percent. This financing structure made it an easy choice for LHRIC to purchase and deploy Energy Management Suite.

## Results

With Energy Management Suite, LHRIC is setting a precedent in New York and for other RICs across the country. Smartly evaluating energy consumption is helping schools in Westchester, Putnam, and Rockland Counties reduce their collective footprints and save money, while still using connected-learning solutions to get closer to attaining 21st century learning goals.

By using Energy Management Suite, the schools in LHRIC’s districts have gained more energy and cost-saving opportunities. While LHRIC had previously uncovered small ways to save energy, with Energy Management Suite, schools can now set standards for power savings and manage smart-energy savings tactics and programs. The solution is centralized, giving schools a complete view of their systems and savings. This transparency is helping superintendents and other decision makers plan for the future and make important budgeting decisions for their schools.

# New York Schools Save Money with Energy Management Solution



Lower Hudson Regional Information Center deploys Cisco® energy management tool to save money while connecting education.

“From what we’ve seen at the schools, CEM is a no-brainer for the RIC. It pays to be smart with energy savings.”

**Dr. Dennis Lauro**  
Executive Director,  
Lower Hudson Regional Information Center

## Product List

- Cisco Energy Management Suite

Across the board, energy and costs savings in LHRIC’s counties have been huge. Currently, there are 14,230 devices across 9 locations for LHRIC being managed by Energy Management Suite. As a benchmark, Energy Management Suite can help schools save anywhere from \$30,000 to \$80,000 a year. In the Lower Hudson Valley, sites are reporting savings from 25 to almost 60 percent. “In some districts, there had been nothing done on the energy management front, and so the savings are tremendous,” said Dr. Lauro.

Now that schools are realizing results, they are also starting to think bigger. For example, one school district in Westchester County experienced energy savings early on and asked about expanding Energy Management Suite to non-IT devices. Cisco worked with partner Best Energy Reduction Technologies (BERT), which sells smart plugs, to further connect school networks. The collaboration ensures that non-IT devices, such as laptop carts, vending machines and projectors, can be connected to the overall network. This integration expands the number of devices that schools can monitor. Now, this school district is scaling its energy-savings program to include even more non-IT devices, and other schools are following suit.

Perhaps the greatest indicator of success with Energy Management Suite has been LHRIC’s decision to deploy the solution internally. “From what we’ve seen at the schools, it’s a no-brainer for our information center,” says Dr. Lauro. “It pays to be smart with energy savings. We’re not only speaking about it to our schools, but we are following the same moves for the same reason—to save money and energy.”

## Next Steps

During the 2015–2016 school year, LHRIC is continuing to rollout Energy Management Suite throughout the Lower Hudson Valley. The information center’s top goal is to deploy Energy Management Suite in every school district that wishes to participate in this service, and it’s also committed an additional \$1 million dollars to purchase 100,000 licenses. These seats will expand the use of Energy Management Suite outside the immediate, regional area to other RICs throughout New York. Dr. Lauro and his team also plan to share recent data with state officials as a model to follow throughout the state and country.

LHRIC is also hoping to launch curriculum around Energy Management Suite in the future. In partnership with county schools, the information center is hoping that superintendents and science teachers can use Energy Management Suite as a valuable lesson on energy consumption that students across the state can learn about.

## For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco Energy Management Suite, visit <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/switches/energy-management-technology/index.html>