



# Case Study

Generating cost-savings while increasing the quality of services

## Capital University

### The Customer

Capital University was founded in 1830 and is located in Columbus, Ohio. Historically, Capital has served as a strong model of liberal arts education among small, private higher-education institutions. Like many similar universities, the institution has recently faced challenges related to student enrollment and budgetary pressures.

The University's custodial program had been built on legacy service models and financial assumptions that were no longer sustainable or aligned with current operational needs. As a result, service quality declined, negatively impacting the student experience and overall campus environment. During this period, the incumbent provider, HES Facilities Management, continued to pursue cost increases that were ultimately unfeasible, despite ongoing performance shortcomings.

As these issues continued to mount, the University initiated a search for a new custodial partner—one capable of adapting to the evolving demands of today's higher-education environment while delivering consistent, high-quality service within a financially responsible and flexible framework. Capital sought a provider willing to rethink the custodial model from the ground up, rather than rely on rigid staffing formulas or legacy assumptions. The objective was to stabilize service delivery, restore campus cleanliness standards, and realign the program with the University's academic mission and student-centered priorities. Equally important was identifying a partner that could evolve alongside the institution, adjusting staffing, scope, and methods as enrollment patterns and campus needs continued to change, ensuring long-term sustainability without compromising the quality of the campus environment.

### Customer Challenges

Like many universities today, Capital University was faced with the challenges listed below...



#### Cost Pressures

Like many smaller institutions, fixed budgets limited access to a provider able to deliver an optimal program.



#### Inconsistent Staffing

Inconsistent staffing and unmet commitments prioritized internal provider goals over University needs



#### Lack of Program Flexibility

A lack of partnership and adaptability limited the program's ability to evolve with changing campus needs.

# The Solution

At Capital University, the opportunity was not simply to correct past deficiencies, but to fundamentally reframe how custodial services were delivered, measured, and evolved over time. The University required a partner capable of operating within fixed financial constraints while still delivering a reliable, high-quality program that could adjust as campus demands and market conditions changed. Our approach began with a greenfield mindset, designing a custodial program from the ground up that prioritized alignment, adaptability, and long-term sustainability.

As a more nimble provider with lower overhead, we were able to eliminate layers of administrative complexity that often inflate costs without improving outcomes. This leaner structure allowed resources to be focused where they matter most: consistent frontline staffing, engaged supervision, and proactive quality oversight. Rather than promising service levels that could not be sustained, the program was built on realistic staffing models tied directly to campus usage, academic schedules, and event activity. This ensured that expectations, performance, and cost remained aligned from day one.

A defining element of the program is the understanding that custodial needs are not static. Facilities evolve, enrollment fluctuates, and priorities shift over the life of any contract. To address this reality, the custodial program at Capital University was designed as a living framework, one that is continually assessed and refined rather than locked into assumptions made at the outset of the agreement. Regular reviews, ongoing communication with University stakeholders, and on-site engagement ensure that service levels remain aligned with current goals and operational realities.

This continuous assessment prevents the gradual drift that often undermines long-term custodial contracts, where changing expectations outpace the provider's willingness or ability to adapt. Instead of allowing the contract to become a limiting factor, performance metrics, staffing assumptions, and service priorities are revisited to confirm they still reflect the University's needs. When adjustments are required, they are addressed collaboratively, preserving both financial discipline and service quality.

The result was an enhanced and vibrant student environment, one defined by cleaner, more welcoming facilities that support learning, engagement, and campus pride. By combining lower overhead, a nimble operating model, and a commitment to continuous alignment, Capital University now benefits from a custodial program designed not only to meet operational requirements, but to positively influence the daily experience of students, faculty, staff, and visitors across campus.

# The Results

A true transformation that resulted in a vibrant student environment.

- **Improved Quality of Services**

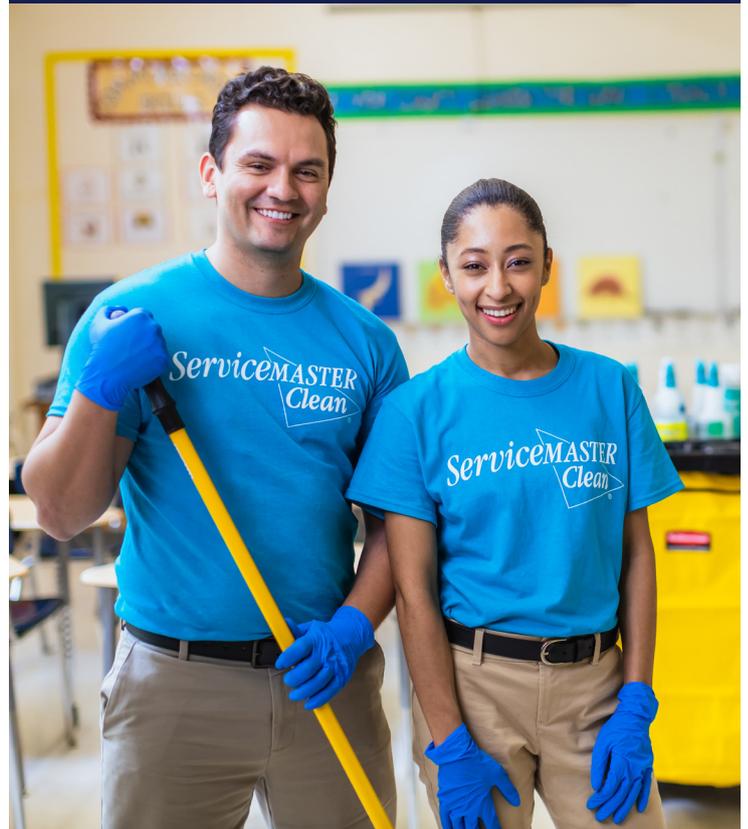
Consistently scored over 95% in joint quality-assurance audits over the course of a full-year.

- **Staff Retention**

Due to employee programs and defined but realistic expectations, staff retention has risen to nearly 85%+

- **Cost-Savings**

Over the course of the contract, the ServiceMaster Clean model will produce over \$300,000 in savings.



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