

WHERE AT



**Annual Report
FY 2026**

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By the Numbers

FY 2026



74 Central IT staff
20 Student employees
19 Other IT staff at UM

} Mountain campus



9,409

Total ticket requests received



342

Hardware purchase requests



676

Software purchase requests

Information Security Office



5,983

Endpoints inventoried & managed



~636,000

Web threats blocked



~94,000

Phishing emails blocked



36

Account compromises contained

IT EXEC TEAM LEADERSHIP

Zachary Rossmiller, AVP
Chief Information Officer

Corey Cardoza, Deputy CIO
Enterprise
& Strategic Technologies

Scott Holgate, Associate CIO
Client Experience
& Technology Infrastructure

Jonathan Neff, CISO
Information Security Office

ON-CAMPUS LOCATIONS

Social Science Building
Liberal Arts (Eck) Building

UM IT HELPDESK
Mansfield Library - Main Floor
406.243.HELP (4357)
ithelpdesk@umontana.edu

ONLINE

umt.edu/it
umt.edu/solutions

From the CIO

Technology is integral to every aspect of the University of Montana's mission. It shapes how students learn, how faculty teach and conduct research, and how employees deliver the services that support our campus community. As technology continues to evolve, so does our responsibility to provide solutions that are effective, secure, and aligned with the University's long-term strategic goals.

Fiscal Year 2026 was a year of meaningful progress. Across Information Technology, we continued modernizing enterprise systems, strengthening cybersecurity, investing in resilient infrastructure, and improving the digital experience for students, faculty, and staff. These efforts reflect our commitment to not only supporting today's needs but also preparing the University for tomorrow's opportunities.



One of the most exciting developments this year has been our continued leadership in the **responsible adoption of artificial intelligence**. AI presents tremendous opportunities to enhance teaching, learning, research, and administrative operations, but realizing those opportunities requires thoughtful planning and collaboration. Throughout the year, UM IT partnered with faculty, staff, and campus leaders to expand access to secure AI tools, promote AI literacy, and develop resources that encourage innovation while protecting institutional data and maintaining our commitment to academic excellence. Our goal is not simply to adopt new technology, but to help shape how higher education uses AI in ways that are ethical, practical, and mission-driven.

At the same time, we continued **advancing foundational initiatives** that often operate behind the scenes but have a lasting impact across the University. Our progress on Banner modernization, digital identity, cloud services, network infrastructure, cybersecurity, and service delivery is creating a more connected, efficient, and resilient technology environment for the entire UM community.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication of our IT professionals and the collaboration of our campus partners. Together, we are **building a technology foundation** that enables innovation, supports institutional success, and positions UM to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.

ZACH ROSSMILLER
Chief Information Officer
University of Montana

The Four Strategic Pillars that Guide UM IT

UM IT's work is guided by four priorities that align technology investments with the University's mission. These are interdependent commitments that together create a more connected, resilient, and capable digital university.

Improve IT Service Delivery

Responsibilities:

- Client support services
- Contracted support services
- UM IT HelpDesk
- Accessibility technologies
- Software licensing
- Computer lab management
- IT facilities
- Servers and systems administration
- Classroom technology
- Campus network infrastructure
- Telephone and unified communications
- Enterprise application administration

FY 2026 Impact:

- Modernized campus network, wireless, and data center infrastructure to improve reliability and expand capacity
- Advanced the Windows 10 replacement initiative and expanded modern endpoint management university-wide
- Continued migration to Microsoft Teams Voice, replacing legacy telephony with a unified, flexible communications platform
- Standardized service documentation and expanded TeamDynamix for more consistent and transparent service management
- Expanded cloud-based infrastructure and application delivery for improved scalability and operational efficiency
- Advanced campus digital accessibility through new tools and dedicated support services

Streamline & Simplify the Digital Experience

Responsibilities:

- ERP database and application administration
- Banner technical management
- Systems analysis, integrations, and process improvement
- Web application development
- Web content support services
- Enterprise systems project management
- CRM administration, integration, and strategy
- Identity and access management

FY 2026 Impact:

- Advanced UM's multi-year Banner modernization initiative; completed Helena College's Banner Cloud migration and retired additional Banner 8 legacy components
- Expanded Banner Document Management and SoftDocs to reduce paper-based workflows and strengthen digital records management
- Implemented NeoEd Learn and Perform (employee training and performance), Scholarship Universe (student financial aid), and Emburse/ChromeRiver (travel and expense management)
- Progressed the One Digital Identity initiative through Microsoft Entra, identity lifecycle improvements, and expanded single sign-on capabilities
- Delivered new digital services including Amplify AI, NelNet Storefronts, and the New Employee Database

Four Pillars (continued)

Strengthen UM's Cybersecurity Posture

Responsibilities:

- Security policies and standards
- Security awareness training
- Security incident response
- Identity security
- Risk assessments
- Governance, risk, and compliance
- Vulnerability management

FY 2026 Impact:

- Published the UM IT Policies and Standards Knowledge Base and established formal minimum security standards for university-managed systems
- Continued implementation of Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) using Splunk and Cribl to improve threat visibility and incident response capability
- Advanced multi-factor authentication and identity and access management across university systems
- Strengthened institutional preparedness through tabletop exercises, incident response planning, and UM System collaboration
- Expanded employee and student cybersecurity training through NeoEd, reinforcing security as a shared campus responsibility

Advance UM's AI Strategy & Innovation

Responsibilities:

- Enterprise AI strategy
- AI governance and policy development
- AI platform administration
- Campus AI education and literacy
- AI consulting and adoption support
- Evaluation of emerging AI technologies

FY 2026 successes:

- Launched umontana.ai as the University's centralized hub for AI resources, guidance, and approved tools
- Expanded access to Amplify AI, providing faculty and staff with leading AI models through a secure enterprise environment
- Delivered AI literacy programming including a campus AI Symposium and monthly TRAIL (Technology, Real-world AI, and Learning) workshops
- Partnered with campus units to identify operational AI use cases focused on efficiency, student support, and knowledge management
- Developed AI governance guidance and an institutional framework aligned with UM's academic, security, and ethical priorities

Enterprise Technologies

Building a more connected digital university



Behind every student registration, payroll transaction, financial aid award, and business process is a complex network of enterprise systems that keep the University of Montana running. Throughout FY2026, the Enterprise Technologies team continued to modernize these critical systems, helping create a more connected, efficient, and user-focused digital environment for students, faculty, and staff.

A major focus remained the University's multi-year **Banner modernization initiative**. By continuing to reduce customizations and align core Banner systems with vendor best practices, the team made meaningful progress toward a more sustainable enterprise environment that is easier to maintain, more resilient, and better positioned to support future innovation. Significant milestones included the successful migration of Helena College to Banner Cloud, retirement of additional Banner 8 components, and continued expansion of Banner 9 and Ellucian Experience across affiliated campuses.

Beyond Banner, Enterprise Technologies advanced a number of **strategic software initiatives** designed to improve administrative efficiency while reducing manual work. The implementation and expansion of **NeoEd Learn and Perform** strengthened employee training and performance management, while **Scholarship Universe** streamlined financial aid opportunities for students. Continued growth of **Banner Document Management and SoftDocs** supported the University's transition away from paper-based processes, improving workflow efficiency and expanding secure digital records management. Additional enterprise solutions, including **Emburse (ChromeRiver)**, further simplified travel and expense management across campus.



The team also continued developing web applications and digital services that enhance the campus experience. New solutions — including **NelNet Storefronts**, the new **Employee Database**, accessibility improvements through **DubBot**, and the integration of **Amplify AI** — demonstrate how technology can improve services while supporting institutional priorities.



Underlying each of these initiatives is a common objective: creating enterprise systems that work together seamlessly. By modernizing core technologies, expanding digital workflows, and reducing system complexity, Enterprise Technologies is helping the University deliver better services today while building the flexibility needed to meet tomorrow's challenges. These investments strengthen the University's operational foundation, enabling faculty and staff to spend less time navigating technology and more time advancing the University's mission of education, research, and public service.

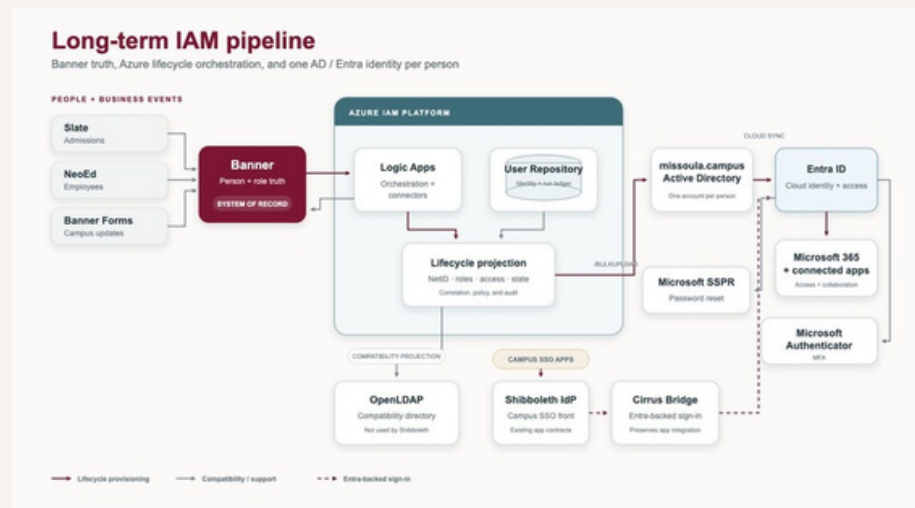
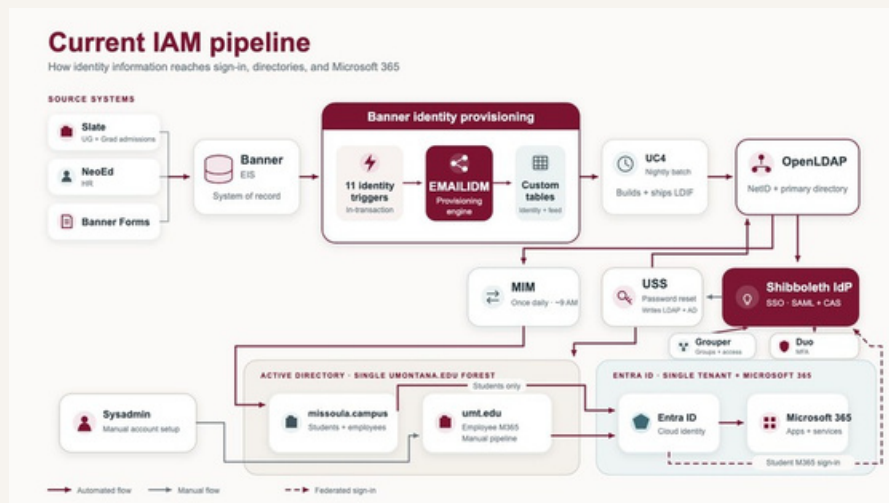


Client Experience

Delivering technology with people at the center

Outstanding technology is measured not only by how well it performs, but by how easily people can use it. Throughout FY2026, the Client Experience team focused on making technology more **accessible, intuitive, and responsive** for students, faculty, and staff while continuing to strengthen the quality and consistency of IT services across UM.

One of the year's most significant initiatives was continued progress toward the **One Digital Identity** vision. As identity management evolves, the University is simplifying how students and employees access the systems they rely on every day. Continued implementation of Microsoft Entra, identity lifecycle improvements, expanded single sign-on capabilities, and planning for broader multi-factor authentication are laying the groundwork for a more secure and seamless digital experience across campus.





Building on the successful consolidation of the **UM IT HelpDesk** on the main floor of the Mansfield Library, the team shifted its attention toward creating a more consistent service experience. Efforts throughout the year emphasized the development of standardized service practices, clearer communication, and expanded use of TeamDynamix to better manage services and support requests. These improvements are helping establish a more transparent, reliable, and customer-focused approach to technology support.

The Client Experience team also continued supporting the University's transition to **modern workplace technologies**. Ongoing migration to Microsoft Teams Voice is replacing legacy telephony with a unified communications platform that better supports collaboration, flexibility, and hybrid work. At the same time, continued expansion of Microsoft 365 services is providing new opportunities for secure collaboration, information sharing, and productivity.



These initiatives reflect a broader shift in how UM IT serves the University. Rather than simply responding to technology issues, the Client Experience team is working proactively to **remove barriers, simplify digital interactions, and create services** that are easier to access, easier to understand, and better aligned with the needs of the campus community. By combining responsive support with thoughtful service design, the team is helping ensure technology becomes an enabler of teaching, learning, research, and everyday work across the University.



IT Infrastructure

Building the foundation for a digital future

Reliable technology begins with resilient infrastructure. Throughout FY2026, the IT Infrastructure team continued strengthening the systems, networks, and platforms that power teaching, learning, research, and administrative operations across the University of Montana. Although much of this work occurs behind the scenes, it provides the **essential foundation for every digital service** across the University.

During FY2026, the IT Infrastructure team made significant investments in **modernizing the University's technology environment** to improve reliability, capacity, and security. Upgrades to core networking equipment, switching infrastructure, wireless systems, and data center facilities strengthened connectivity, replaced aging hardware, and improved the resilience of critical services.

A major milestone was the deployment of new next-generation firewalls (NGFWs), providing significantly enhanced protection for the University's network. Unlike traditional firewalls, NGFWs inspect traffic at the application level, use real-time threat intelligence to identify emerging risks, and provide greater visibility into network activity. These capabilities strengthen the University's ability to detect and block sophisticated cyber threats while improving network management.

The University also continued progress toward Windows 11 deployment and modern endpoint management, creating a more secure, consistent computing environment while simplifying device administration.



Infrastructure modernization also extended beyond the physical campus. Continued expansion of cloud-based services improved scalability and operational flexibility, while migration to Microsoft Teams Voice advanced the University's unified communications strategy with a modern platform supporting collaboration from virtually anywhere.

Investments in advanced networking and computing infrastructure continue to expand the University's ability to support data-intensive research, high-performance computing, and collaboration with partners across Montana and beyond.



Throughout FY2026, the IT Infrastructure team remained focused on replacing aging systems before they become operational risks and designing technology with long-term scalability in mind. This strategic approach improves reliability, reduces technical debt, and creates a strong foundation for future digital initiatives.

While much of the team's work remains invisible to the campus community, its impact is reflected in nearly **every technology service** the University provides. By modernizing critical systems and expanding capacity, the IT Infrastructure team is ensuring the University of Montana is prepared to support future growth, emerging technologies, and innovation.

Information Security

Protecting the University's digital environment

UM's information security program is structured around the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework (CSF 2.0). In FY26 the ISO continued to mature and optimize an established program, turning security telemetry into measurable protection across all UM System campuses.

Govern: A published policy and standards framework administered by the ISO.

- Two enterprise security policies
- 21 published security standards
- Written Information Security Program (WISP)
- Vendor risk assessment & exception governance

Identify: Know the environment — assets, risk, and the systems that carry regulated data.

- 5,3983 endpoints inventoried & managed
- Four campuses covered
- NIST 800-171 research (CUI) enclave

Protect: Reduce exposure — block threats, strengthen identity, build the human firewall.

- ~ 636,000 web threats blocked
- ~ 94,000 phishing emails blocked
- MFA/DUO expansion · awareness training reach expanded

Detect: Surface real threats from noise — the year's core maturity story.

- 3,345 → 1,204 endpoint alerts triaged to confirmed threats
- 1,801 cloud & email detections reviewed

Respond: Contain and resolve - a defined incident response capability in action.

- 36 account compromises contained
- IT Incident Response Plan & Incident Response Standard

Recover: Rehearse and mature restoration of operations after an incident.

- Two campus affiliate tabletop exercises (Montana Tech, Helena College)
- Response & recovery playbooks exercised

The ISO is an **established program** focused on continuous improvement and demonstrable value. FY26 was a year of advancing, optimizing, and expanding: a mature standards framework governing the enterprise, broader threat-blocking and identity coverage, and a growing ability to turn raw security data into confident, prioritized action.

The signal-from-noise story

Raw alert volume badly overstates real risk — roughly two-thirds of endpoint alerts prove benign on review. The value the ISO adds is **triage and tuning**: this year 3,345 endpoint alerts resolved to 1,204 genuine threats. Maturing this discipline is the foundation for FY27's investment in a security information and event management (SIEM) platform and formal triage workflows.



- **Governance:** maintained an established, NIST CSF-aligned framework — two policies and 21 published security standards spanning identity, endpoints, network, data, vendors, and vulnerabilities.
- **Endpoints:** unified protection across 5,983 devices and four campuses, advancing toward the endpoint security-standard coverage goal.
- **Identity:** expanded multi-factor authentication and progressed identity lifecycle governance aligned to Microsoft Entra.
- **Detection and response:** contained 36 account compromises and matured triage across endpoint, cloud, and email telemetry.
- **Awareness culture:** expanded security awareness training reach and identified priority audience segments for FY27.
- **Resilience:** exercised incident response and recovery playbooks through tabletop exercises at Montana Tech and Helena College.

Security is a shared responsibility. FY26 outcomes reflect partnership across UM — IT Infrastructure & Network Services, Research & Sponsored Programs, the Registrar and Student Services, and Finance & HR — advancing GLBA, FERPA, and federal research (CUI) compliance together.

Artificial Intelligence & Innovation

Leading with purpose in the age of AI

Artificial intelligence is transforming higher education at an unprecedented pace. From teaching and research to administrative operations and student services, AI is reshaping how universities work and how they prepare students for the future. Rather than simply responding to these changes, the University of Montana is taking a **deliberate, mission-driven approach** — one that encourages innovation while emphasizing security, ethics, and human expertise.

Throughout FY2026, UM Information Technology continued helping the University build the foundation for responsible AI adoption by expanding secure enterprise tools, developing campus resources, supporting AI literacy, and fostering collaboration across academic and administrative units.

Creating a secure foundation for AI at UM

As interest in generative AI continues to grow, providing trusted, institutionally supported tools has become increasingly important. During FY2026, UM **expanded access to enterprise AI platforms and resources** that allow faculty and staff to explore emerging technologies while helping safeguard institutional data and intellectual property.

The pivotal rollout of **ChatMT.ai** provides secure, shared AI access across the entire Montana University System. Complementing this effort, **umontana.ai** serves as the central hub for AI information and resources, bringing together guidance, approved tools, training opportunities, and practical examples in one location.

By establishing trusted platforms before widespread adoption occurs, UM is enabling innovation while reducing the risks associated with consumer AI services.

Building AI knowledge across campus

Technology alone is not enough to create meaningful transformation. Successful AI adoption depends on helping people understand when — and how — to use these tools effectively.

Throughout the year, UM IT expanded opportunities for faculty and staff to build AI literacy through workshops, demonstrations, presentations, and practical learning resources. These efforts focused not only on learning how AI works, but on developing the critical thinking skills needed to evaluate outputs, recognize limitations, protect sensitive information, and use AI responsibly.

This emphasis on education reflects UM's belief that AI should augment human expertise and ability, not replace it.

From exploration to practical impact

AFY2026 also marked an important shift from exploring AI's potential to **identifying meaningful institutional applications**.

Working alongside campus partners, UM IT began evaluating opportunities to apply AI in ways that improve efficiency, reduce repetitive administrative work, and allow employees to focus more time on high-value activities. Early conversations included opportunities to streamline business processes, enhance student support, strengthen knowledge management, and improve access to institutional information.

Rather than pursuing AI for its own sake, these efforts have remained grounded in solving real challenges facing the University community.

Guiding responsible innovation

One of UM's greatest strengths has been its intentional approach to AI adoption.

As new technologies emerge almost daily, the University has prioritized thoughtful governance, collaboration, and shared understanding over rapid implementation. Throughout FY2026, UM IT worked with campus leaders to develop guidance, evaluate emerging technologies, and help establish a framework for AI that aligns with the University's academic mission, information security standards, and institutional values.

This balanced approach recognizes that responsible innovation requires both **curiosity and accountability**.

Looking ahead

Artificial intelligence will continue to influence every aspect of higher education — from research and teaching to student success and administrative operations. The University of Montana is well positioned to lead this transformation by combining modern technology with a strong commitment to ethics, security, and human-centered innovation.

As AI capabilities continue to evolve, UM IT will remain focused on expanding secure enterprise tools, strengthening AI literacy, supporting responsible experimentation, and identifying opportunities where artificial intelligence can meaningfully enhance the work of the University.

UM IT is committed to helping create and expand campus environment where innovation can thrive while remaining firmly aligned with the University's mission of education, research, and public service.



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