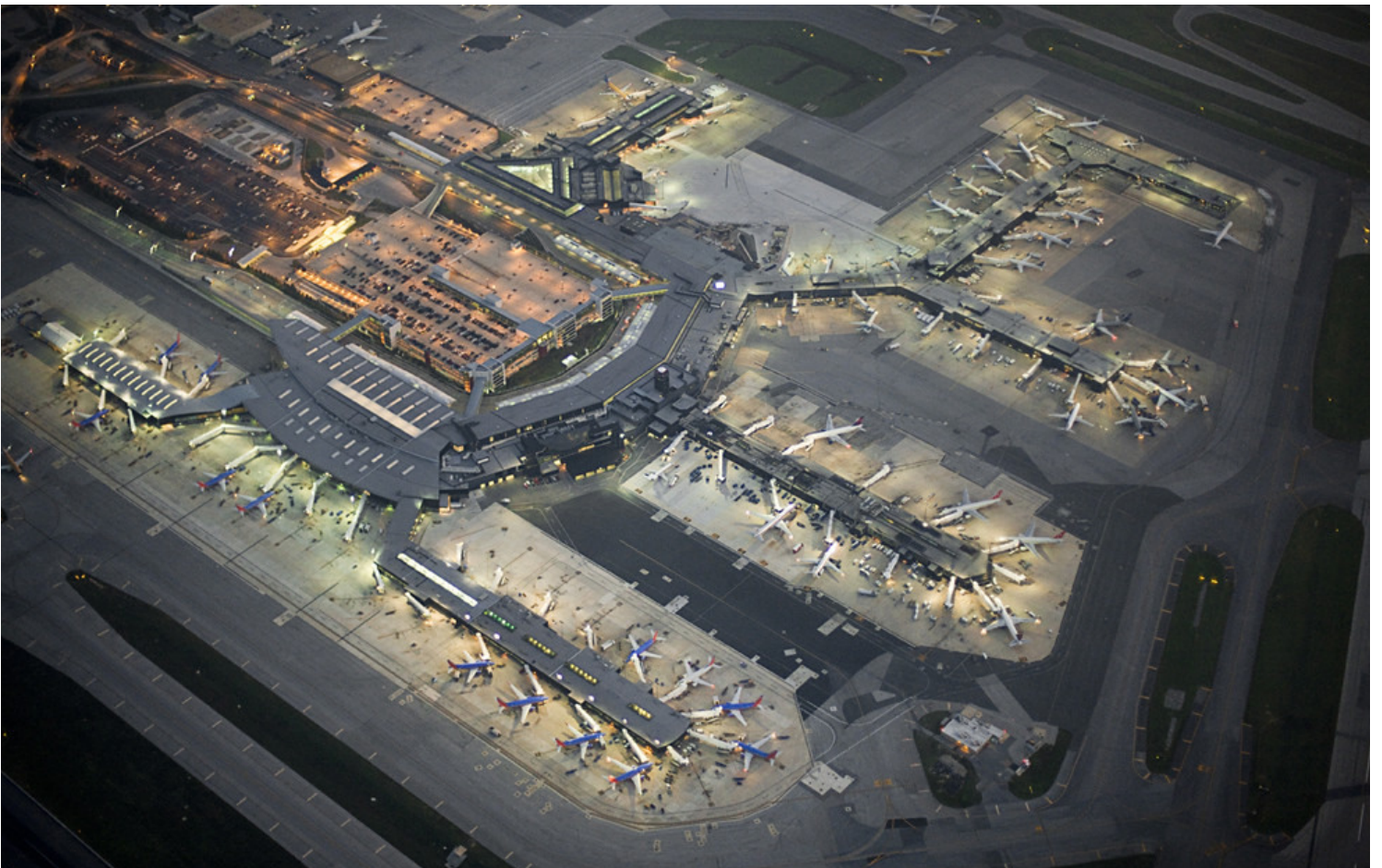




# Baltimore / Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport

Case Study





## Overview

### Major airport transitions from manual fiber management to insights in clicks

Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI), located in Baltimore, Maryland, had thousands of connections and they needed a way to identify where fiber was located, determine capacity, and to simplify circuit management: the team wanted to know where fiber end points without having to walk it just to find out, understand capacity, reduce trips to the field, retain information, and simplify circuit management. As just one person managed the fiber, it was paramount to document this manager's wealth of knowledge for the next person at some point in the future.

Previously, they had used a different software solution for documenting fiber - however, the solution required so much time that it was untenable. Today, BWI's connections are documented neatly in netTerrain.

When changes are made, it's easy to track them and ensure the documentation stays up to date. The days of having to walk miles of cable are now in the past: insights are available from any web-browser.



## Before netTerrain

### Inefficient Documentation Database Results in Time-Prohibitive Work

The need for increased security in the early 00's was a call to action for Thurgood-Marshall Baltimore International Airport (BWI), located in Baltimore, Maryland: the team needed a way to clearly identify what fiber they had available and where it all was. To solve this issue, they hired an expert RCDD, Dwayne Abrams, to take charge of all of the fiber. Initially, Abrams was brought on as a contractor but was quickly hired full-time as BWI identified they would need a permanent manager.

When BWI first started documenting its fiber, few software options were available. To document fiber connections, they used a software platform that was extremely time-consuming: documenting just one circuit took 30 minutes of time. There are thousands and thousands of connections at BWI - 30 minutes to enter in a single circuit was prohibitive.

## Goal

Thousands of connections, across multiple sites, documented by one person

BWI wanted a way to quickly and efficiently document its thousands of connections so that information about fiber locations, connections, and availability would be quickly accessible when needed.

They wanted to:

- quickly document circuits
- eliminate the need to walk miles to figure out where fiber goes
- ability to provide BWI's RD team with answers that assisted troubleshooting without delay
- retain employee knowledge in the case of churn



## Challenge

Usable software that makes documenting thousands of connections easy

The previous tool that BWI had been using was far too time-consuming and cumbersome to use. With one person on the task, and thousands of connections to document, finding a solution that allowed for circuits, connections, and paths to be quickly entered was paramount. Further, a prolonged learning curve would not be tenable for the one-person team that had other duties in addition to documentation. Finally, they wanted software from a vendor that could offer excellent customer support that would be available on-site as needed.

## Solution

Inside and outside plant software designed for efficiency

As they already had a solution they used for documenting the fiber in place that wasn't working, lesser solutions such as Google Earth or spreadsheets were immediately ruled out.

After the first demo, BWI identified that netTerrain would be able to check all of their boxes and then some: netTerrain would also allow them the ability to inside IT assets such as data center racks and cabinets. Additionally, netTerrain could be accessed from any standard web-based browser — which would allow the team to access its documentation with ease.

## Implementation

One person documents thousands of connections across multiple sites

The team selected netTerrain DCIM with the add-on OSP module so that fiber, connections, assets, and data center racks could all be documented using netTerrain.

Dwayne was able to document BWI's thousands of connections, in addition to its exterior buildings, maintenance locations plus Martin State Airport, a secondary airport in Maryland. Support has been helpful and prompt: reaching an expert is as simple as picking up the phone or opening up a ticket, and he hears back within the day.





## Results

### Reliable Information about Thousands of Connections Available in Seconds

The need to walk miles of fiber to figure out where it leads to is now just an unpleasant memory; with netTerrain, a team member can access the fiber documentation by simply opening up a web browser and logging in. BWI has now replaced the impossible task of documenting and visualizing its circuits and connections via software that took 30 minutes per circuit with software that takes less than a minute to document a circuit.

Thousands of connections are neatly documented across multiple buildings and sites. Having this documentation in place ensures that, when Dwayne eventually passes along the torch, the next person to take over his job won't be starting from scratch; all of Dwayne's legacy knowledge will be retained and able to help the next person.

**“netTerrain has saved us an unbelievable amount of time. Now, if the network guys have a question, I can pull up our documentation from wherever I am and give them an answer. Plus, when i retire, I know that my work will be retained for the next person.”**

- Dwayne Abrams  
IT Tech Support Specialist Supervisor  
PDS Administrator



## **Learn More**

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