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The Scots College.

The Challenge

With technology now an increasing driver of education, The Scots College required an upgrade of their network infrastructure, including upgrading wireless access to all end users.

With an ageing network and an already busy IT department, the College was struggling to manage the existing network infrastructure centrally or gauge its efficiency. Increasing file sizes were congesting the internal network, slowing it considerably. They required a solution that would provide network infrastructure capable of supporting the growing amount of data, applications, video, audio and email, as well as their intranet and student management system.

Specifically, The Scots College's ICT Director, Paul Lister, sought an IT solutions partner to design and deliver a new core network infrastructure. Key requirements for the new framework included:

- a network capable of speeds of up to 10 Gbps,
- improved redundancy of the core network systems,
- a management tool to facilitate network transparency and wireless access, and
- ongoing maintenance and support to allow the college's IT resources to focus on other business deliverables.

"The Scots College needed a significant upgrade. We're in a digital world, files are bigger and there are more students using the network," Paul explained.

The Scots College selected Ricoh IT Services for their high level technical and network design knowledge, capacity to support the project, proven track record and strong focus on ongoing customer service.

"In making our decision, technical knowledge and the ability to design the solution was number one. We are time poor. It was important for us to choose a partner who understands our environment, issues and future requirements," Paul said.

"RicoH IT Services were chosen because they were prepared to take the time to sit down with us, understand our business, and cater the solution for our requirements."

About The Scots College

Founded in 1893, The Scots College is one of Australia's oldest and most reputable boys' schools, educating from preschool through to year 12

Attracting students from across Australia as well as from around the world, they focus strongly on encouraging students to persist, persevere and achieve, facilitated by world-class amenities and innovative programs.

It is therefore an imperative of the College to ensure their technology is state-of-the-art.

As a result students and staff are better connected, and better able to share ideas and information, resulting in an improved educational experience.

The Solution: A Network Infrastructure that's faster and stronger

A new Cisco network infrastructure was installed at the College's three campuses in Bellevue Hill. A dedicated Ricoh IT Services team worked with the College's IT staff over the Christmas break to ensure minimal disruption to staff and students.

The solution is comprised of Nexus and Catalyst switches, Wireless LAN Controllers, and Access Points to make up the framework for the College's new network infrastructure. To extend wireless coverage and density, an increase in Access Points as well as a high availability Wireless LAN Controller Cluster was built into the design.

The Results: Capable and reliable digital delivery

Designed by Ricoh IT Services, the new core network provides a huge increase in performance, allowing for the bandwidth required for next-generation wireless needs as well as current and future applications.

The benefits of the new infrastructure were seen immediately; "We upgraded the switches on the internal network environment so all large digital files, plus internal hosted websites, email and our student management system are quicker," said Paul.

The new network has provided reliability and speed in sending and accessing information across the three campuses, with students and staff now enjoying speeds of up to 10 Gbps.

To add greater redundancy, additional fibre links were used where possible to collapse the distribution layer and remove single points of failure.

"It was imperative that we saw an improvement in the redundancy in our core network infrastructure," Paul said. "The new network design has delivered on that."

Helping staff across the board

It's important to note that behind the staff and students at The Scots College is a dedicated business that also needs exemplary resources to ensure its ongoing success. The Ricoh IT Services' solution was designed and implemented to address the needs of all staff and administration requirements of the College.

"Whether you're working in marketing, catering, facilities, or in the curriculum and learning side of the school, it has improved access to critical information when needed," Paul said.

"As a result students and staff are better connected, and better able to share ideas and information, resulting in an improved educational experience."

Innovative Network Management

A critical deliverable of the new environment was the implementation of Cisco Prime. A one-stop management platform for all wired and wireless clients, it will enable the College's ICT department the ability to manage and monitor all network devices and connected clients right through to the application level using Cisco's Application Visibility Control (AVC) technology.

Prime will bolster the efficiency of the network infrastructure, enabling better management of ICT staff resources. It also provides a greater level of redundancy by removing single points of failure.

"We now have increased and improved visibility of network issues," Paul said. "Though it's still early days, we're learning about the software and how to extract the most value out of it."

Paul and his team are utilising Prime to improve wireless access to the College's campus community.

"This will place us well to provide ongoing improvement of wireless access points across the campuses to students, as education becomes increasingly reliant on technology."

A long term partnership

The delivery of the new infrastructure has enabled ICT staff to focus on their core deliverables, enabling the College to provide premium services to students, teachers and staff alike.

Implemented on time and within budget, they now have a core network across their Bellevue Hill campuses that provides the bandwidth required for the next-generation wireless as well as current and future applications.

Based on the success of this project, Ricoh IT Services are engaged to provide ongoing maintenance and support as part of the College's network management.

"The implementation has achieved its deliverables. We're very happy with Ricoh IT Services and happy to use them as our network and systems integrator moving forward," said Paul.

In fact, The Scots College is now considering similar upgrades of other campuses through their partnership with Ricoh IT Services.

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