

Building a platform for strategic transformation

Networking



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

A knowledgeable IT partner

The University had decided that a Cisco® based infrastructure should be deployed and that it should offer both fixed and secure wireless access for students, staff and visitors.

The network needed to be resilient and future proofed to meet the increasing needs of users. It also needed to support the growth of video, predicted to comprise 90% of student driven internet traffic in 5 years time.

A procurement project was initiated to identify and select potential suppliers and provide ongoing strategic input. BT was able to demonstrate a proven track record of similar successful network deployments as well as being the preferred UK partner of Cisco®. BT's skill set most closely matched the University's demanding requirements, including its ability to work in partnership with the Cisco® Advanced Services team.

Says Mike Roberts, IT director for Warwick University: "This was a challenging eight month programme to completely replace our existing network. The network is a 24/7 operation on a very large infrastructure.

BT helps Warwick University in its goal to become one of the world's top universities.

The University of Warwick is one of the UK's leading research universities, with 5,000 staff providing higher education to over 21,000 students. It needed to be able to fulfill the ever-increasing demands of its users by allowing students and staff faster access to University applications, services, resources and the internet. It also wanted to meet its strategic objective of becoming one of the world's top 50 universities by 2015 but first needed to ensure its IT and networking facilities were up to the job.

The University had five goals it needed to fulfill in order to achieve its objective. The first was to become an undisputed world leader in Research and Scholarship. The second, to sustain an exceptional teaching and learning experience. Thirdly, Warwick needed to work towards becoming an international portal. It wanted to enhance its reputation with stakeholders in the UK. And finally, Warwick needed to become a more effective generator of income.

The University knew it wouldn't be able to achieve any of these goals without the right IT infrastructure. Its determination to grow, as well as prudent financial management, enabled it to make the investment in its network, despite a tough economic climate.

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The Cisco® based network provided by BT features the latest ‘high end’ Cisco Nexus® switches at the core. It extends to 35,000 access points and includes Wireless access to students, staff and visitors.

The solution was implemented over a 14-week period in the summer – an exceptionally swift deployment for a public sector organisation. It provides a high capacity, highly available and resilient network pre-enabled with an array of advanced applications and Unified Communications such as Video Conferencing, Surveillance, Intelligent Buildings and Cisco TelePresence®.

Technology to meet challenges

The new network from BT will save Warwick an estimated £15 million over 11 years due to its future proofed capability.

Explains Mike: “This project is viewed as a tremendous success. In addition to very impressive implementation and an improvement in core network performance, we are now beginning to see benefits from advanced applications. Video and large data set capabilities have improved significantly and network performance speeds are now 8 times faster. We are also seeing non-technical benefits through our evolving strategic relationships with BT and Cisco®.”

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Mike Roberts
IT director, Warwick University

Access points are located in all student campus accommodation, throughout the University in lecture theatres, reading areas and touchdown study points. The WLAN provides secure authenticated access for staff, students and visitors with a VPN capability enabling remote off site access to the network.

The new network is now ready for the stringent demands of postgraduate research students. University staff can hold global video conferences with overseas students and potential employees, aiding online induction programmes and recruitment. They’ve also been able to increase the online courses and associated content they offer.

The solution deployed wouldn’t be out of place in a Blue Chip organisation, and the network will support the University’s objective to build partnerships with Industry – there’s already a Cisco TelePresence® solution that’s been developed with Birmingham Science Park, which has forged relationships extending to Silicon Valley.

Find out more: itservices@bt.com | www.bt.com/itservices

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