



● Data network upgrade improving users' connectivity. ●

The Background

Lambeth College is a large further education college based in South East London. 20,000 students enrol onto its courses each year and it employs around 800 staff. The college is located on four sites at Clapham, Brixton, Vauxhall and Streatham and has a commitment to provide excellent quality in teaching and learning. To offer students a modern, 21st century learning experience, the college embarked on an ambitious £61m re-development of its sites at Brixton, Clapham and Vauxhall.

Lambeth College is a customer of Daisy Corporate Services (formerly Damovo UK).

The Challenge

Poor performance of the data network was beginning to affect student and staff's ability to use the Internet and other applications at the college. Lambeth College knew it wanted to change from a 3Com to Cisco data solution and turned to its Voice provider Daisy to manage the project. Graeme Hill, Head of IT at Lambeth College, explains; "It was such that if one switch failed in a stack, the whole stack failed; with a Cisco solution, we could have resilience built in to ensure continuity of service. We realised that with the quality of support – and particularly the quality of technical resources that Daisy has at hand – they were going to be our preferred supplier to take our networking strategy forward."

The Solution

The first phase was an upgrade of the core network. Daisy recommended the college upgraded to 100MBs data links but keep the voice circuits which were functioning perfectly well. The second phase was an upgrade of the LAN infrastructure. Lambeth College also decided to combine this project with an upgrade of the data connections between the college's four sites.

It helped that Daisy was working across all three projects, as Graeme explains, "The projects seemed to merge into one as we had the same project manager for the communications move and obviously the account manager has always been the same, which provided the glue to make sure everything was on track and all the suppliers were talking to one another."

"It was a tough project because obviously we were working on the basis that there would be no interruption to college business or services, so most of the work had to be done at weekends or in the evenings."

The MD110 voice system was moved over seamlessly and was fully operational after one weekend of work. As part of the data networking upgrade, the Mitel MD110 was also upgraded to the latest Mitel MX-ONE™ switch, in order to offer IP functionality. The college has taken the decision to use IP telephony at its Adare Centre in Streatham, which is the smallest site and, therefore, only



had a single voice and data WAN link. During the WAN upgrade, Daisy recommended that the college used VoIP for this site, rather than incur the large expense of putting in a new cable. Remote IP extensions from the Clapham Centre provide local resilience to the Adare Centre.

The Result

Since implementing the new LAN and WAN environment, students and staff have seen an instant improvement in the performance of the Internet and business applications at the college.

“The Internet is used massively by our students and with faster inter-site links they receive a much better service. Also, staff at remote centres often used to struggle to receive decent connectivity with students grabbing bandwidth to use the Internet, but this has changed overnight. Our business applications are performing much better, so it has had a benefit for the performance of our organisation.”

Daisy maintains the network for the college, but on a day-to-day management level, the new data network is easier for Hill and his team to handle.

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