Scalable IT solutions supporting campus mobility

The Background

The University of Hertfordshire is one of the top 100 universities in the world under 50 years old. The university is based across two campuses in Hatfield, in the UK. It is one of the region's largest employers, with more than 2,700 staff and an annual turnover of more than £250 million. At any time it supports a community of more than 25,300 students, including more than 2,800 international students from 100 countries, and a global network of over 195,000 alumni.

The University of Hertfordshire is a customer of Daisy (formerly Alternative).

The Challenge

The University of Hertfordshire had last refreshed its network infrastructure more than 10 years ago, and the old architecture was struggling to support its changing requirements. Equipment was reaching end of life and the network was unable to cope with the volume of data and the new ways people had started to use technology.

Students and staff were accessing resources from two or three wireless devices of their own, alongside the university's own fixed PCs, so the university set out to replace its entire network infrastructure with one that would support its requirements for the next 10 years. It needed to ensure mobility and flexibility of access, enabling its users to get online wherever they were, whenever they wanted, and from any device. As all key services are available online, business continuity during the migration, as well as for subsequent years, was very important.

The Solution

Daisy, along with Juniper Networks, worked with the University of Hertfordshire to design a solution that used Juniper Networks® SRX Series Services Gateways to provide security, and a range of Juniper Networks EX Series Ethernet switches to extend the network across its campus, including the EX3300, X4300, EX4550, and EX9208 platforms. The network provides a number of VPNs, and takes advantage of Juniper's Virtual Chassis technology to operate multiple physical switches as a single entity.

Daisy and Juniper will also be implementing the Junos® Space Network Management Platform, which will provide comprehensive management of Juniper devices with fault, configuration, accounting, performance, and security management (FCAPS) capability. This will give the university control over its entire network from a single point, as well as enabling rapid application security and intrusion prevention system (IPS) updates. The University of Hertfordshire, along with Daisy and Juniper Networks, has also created a community development initiative to provide IT services beyond the university and into the local community.

The Result

With the presence of the 24/7 network operations centre team both Daisy and the University of Hertfordshire have visibility and the ability to react as soon as issues are raised with the network infrastructure at any time. This control through visibility allows the University of Hertfordshire to focus on its core day-to-day actions. A key benefit of the service by Daisy is its strict SLAs that ensure we are clear in our approach and are fully accountable during project delivery.

While further functionality is still due to be added, the network has already expanded capacity to 10GbE, overcoming existing limitations.

Perhaps most importantly, users have been completely unaffected through the migration. The university's IT team put the success of the migration down to thorough planning and a high level of support from Daisy and Juniper. As David Ford explains: "We had a lot of support early on at the planning and design phase. We were provided with a trial kit so we could evaluate the product and have confidence that the migration and implementation would work the way they said it would."

"IT plays an important part in university life both for the staff and the students, and the network is the key element that underpins everything else we do. Juniper and Daisy showed us best practices, and transferred knowledge and skills so now we are completely self-sufficient."

– David Ford, CIO, University of Hertfordshire

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