

CASE STUDY

BRISBANE BOYS' COLLEGE

Data#3

Technology:

Cisco Core Edge and
Wireless Networks

Cisco Core Manager
Unified Communications

Informacast (announcements
and bells) Mobile
Collaboration Trolleys

Cisco Telepresence Design

Samsung ME
Commercial Panels

Magic Info (digital
signage software)

Building the Schools of the Future

Background:

Brisbane Boys' College is one of Australia's most innovative and successful schools. Generations of young men have enjoyed the benefits of its extensive curriculum, outstanding facilities and caring community.

Brisbane Boys' College caters for day students from Prep to Year 12 and boarding students in Years 5 to 12. As a boys school, the College is specifically tailored to meet the needs of young men as they progress through their education.

Brisbane Boys' College prepares tomorrow's leaders by helping them to develop flexibility of mind, strength of character, social skills and a sound belief system.

The Challenge:

Undertaking a large development project – the building of a Middle School precinct including a library and multi-functional educational spaces – gave Brisbane Boys' College an unprecedented opportunity to roll out state-of-the-art IT infrastructure to support 21st century learning and education.

Planning for the new facility was the culmination of a four year detailed analysis of the best technologies used in educational facilities worldwide, from which the College set its strategic direction for IT infrastructure.

The new precinct consists of 35 spaces that are used for both academic and pastoral care activities. With a key driver to deliver a technology rich space for students and staff, Graeme McDonald, Headmaster for the College, recognised that it was essential for the infrastructure to be flexible and sufficient to meet not only current, but also future projected needs.

The Solution:

As part of its strategic direction, the College had been working with Cisco under its Exemplar Schools Program. With an existing relationship with Data#3, and Data#3's extensive Cisco practice, partnering with Data#3 for the Middle School IT infrastructure design and systems integration was a natural fit.

By working collaboratively with the College, its architect, builders and Cisco, Data#3 designed a solution for the space. The solution was developed in 'layers', starting with a world-class network design based on Cisco technology that would underpin and future-proof the delivery of all technology services at the school. Building on the network design, the next layer was to specify the most suitable end user technologies, including

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"This project is a wonderful example of what can be achieved through a strategic business relationship, rather than the traditional 'transactional' approach and we are all so pleased and proud of our new facility."

Graeme McDonald,
Headmaster,
Brisbane Boys' College

collaborative display technologies and software. Data#3 led the design working with key partners such as Video Pro and Samsung to develop and provide the audio visual and video requirements - key to learning in this environment.

The third and critical layer of Data#3's solution was the provision of change management support, particularly to help staff maximise the benefits of the new infrastructure and proposed pedagogical methods. The change management support was about bringing the College's staff on the journey with Data#3 and providing them with all the tools to use the new technology in the classroom. The importance of this was echoed by Head of Strategic Planning for the College, Matthew O'Brien.

"Data#3 really came into their own with the change management process. It made a significant difference to our staff's comfort with and ability to maximise the learning outcomes of the new technologies," said O'Brien.

With business productivity support and training in how to use multiple technology 'hubs' in a learning space, Data#3 helped teachers embrace the opportunity to move seamlessly between different teaching and learning modes. Rather than only supporting didactic teaching and individual work, each learning space was created with the flexibility to quickly break into small or large groups and open up other group learning modes.

With specifically designed furniture that can change set-up and location in seconds, and up to five LCD screens in a learning space which can display the same or different content, teaching and learning becomes much more interactive, varied and relevant. The mix of individual work, small group discussion and traditional, didactic teaching is much more in line with how today's workplaces are structured, better preparing students for their future employment workspaces.

On a recent open evening for parents, one parent exclaimed, "This technology and flexibility is what I'm trying to achieve in my workplace!"

The Outcome:

The facility is used by approximately 550 Middle School students and 61 staff, along with 200 Junior School students and 13 staff.

Students, staff and parents have embraced the new facility. A student survey, conducted in two parts – the first term in which the facility was in use, and repeated in the second term – provided almost universally positive feedback, with students identifying a high degree of 'ownership' of the facilities, and appreciation of the ubiquitous use of technology. Even factors such as regularly changing digital information displays, rather than static posters, were identified as benefits of this technology.

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Teachers recognise the stronger learning outcomes that are driven by interactive learning modes. Traditional teaching modes often conjure up images of the teacher talking and a student listening; now the impact of collaboration and interactivity is much more widely recognised according to Matthew O'Brien. "This means that as students are empowered to drive their learning outcomes, those outcomes are naturally stronger."

"For the current generation of students, for whom technology has been a natural part of life from a young age, the easy access to digital content in the classroom is a natural extension of the ways they learn outside the classroom."

"Partnering with Data#3 enabled us to centralise the project management of the ICT project and this was key to the successful outcomes achieved."

Matthew O'Brien, Head of Strategic Planning, Brisbane Boys' College