

Edith Cowan University

CASE STUDY



Edith Cowan University deploys next-generation Cisco network service

BACKGROUND

Located in Western Australia, Edith Cowan University (ECU) provides tuition to over 27,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students each year, including around 4,000 international students from more than 100 countries.

ECU delivers over 300 courses in Health & Medical Sciences, Engineering, Education, Science, Arts & Humanities, Business & Law, and Nursing & Midwifery, and as well as through the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. These courses are offered at three campuses – Joondalup, Mount Lawley and Bunbury – in addition to a range of online study options.

THE CHALLENGE

As a modern, innovative university, ECU offers flexibility in both curriculum delivery and student learning. This approach needs to be underpinned by reliable wireless connectivity, plus the ability to access the latest collaboration technology for enhanced learning outcomes.

To meet growing wireless business requirements, ECU recognised the need to evolve their IT services to deliver increased capacity, agility and scalability to their end users.

Previous network infrastructure growth had occurred organically and often without structure. As such, ECU needed to rethink their wireless strategy, implement new architecture to resolve current business issues, and provide a flexible and scalable technology platform for the future delivery of IT services.

Key to the solution would be the ability to accommodate increasing mobility and connectivity demands, particularly from students and staff accessing the university's services online.

THE SOLUTION

ECU engaged Data#3 to deliver the new solution, which included strategy and design right through to implementation and ongoing management. Data#3 was selected from a panel of Cisco Gold Partners largely because of their local Professional Services expertise, national education experience, and proven Cisco capabilities.

A next-generation Cisco platform based on new network infrastructure architecture was recommended to replace aging infrastructure and to facilitate efficient service support.

The architecture would enable students and staff across the three ECU campuses to access advanced services such as rich multimedia learning experiences.

Working collaboratively with ECU's Information Technologies Services team, Data#3 implemented the multi-phased solution and delivered full ongoing network operational services and processes for a long-term engagement.

The solution also leveraged Data#3's supply chain management to procure, store, distribute and deploy a high volume of networking devices over an extended period.

Solution highlights:

- Design and deployment of a high-speed, scalable, highly available and secure wireless network based on Cisco best practice design principles
- Multi-tiered architecture providing campus core, distribution, access and aggregation layers for a robust, connected platform
- Radio frequency validation survey across the entire Cisco Wireless LAN environment (indoor and outdoor), as well as management and mobile security platforms
- Transition to Data#3 Managed Services for 24/7 support, as well as tracking, monitoring and reporting on a range of Service Level Targets and Key Performance Indicators
- Operational integration between Data#3 and ECU IT Service Management toolsets, processes and support teams

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Thanks to the new Cisco platform, students, faculty and staff at ECU now have access to state-of-the-art wireless technology to support their learning and research requirements. With five times the capacity of the previous wireless network, the new solution sees users enjoying the benefits of fast and reliable wireless access across all three university campuses. This includes rich multimedia learning experiences, with the new infrastructure capable of handling increased network traffic in the form of videos, gamification, big data and analytics.

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What's more, the new solution also enables ECU to gain real time insights into network performance, resulting in improved decision making and the identification of potential issues before they become major problems. With Data#3's managed service, IT management risk is also reduced, while sustaining maximum availability.

Other business benefits include:

- Fast and reliable connectivity to university IT services
- Increased network capacity, agility and scalability
- Enhanced communication and collaboration between students and staff
- Improved mobility leading to better productivity and user satisfaction
- Service integration delivering a resilient and highly available platform
- Reduced IT management costs and complexity

CONCLUSION

ECU has now successfully transformed their existing network to the latest Cisco fixed and wireless technology. This investment allows the university to deliver a range of new and innovative services to end users across three campuses, as well as rationalise costs and enhance efficiency.

The new platform is managed by the Data#3 Managed Services team in a 3+2 year agreement. This will see all network facilities – wireless, fixed, security and network management – under the Data#3 outsource remit, allowing ECU to focus on strategic business initiatives.

"The replacement of the existing network with next-generation infrastructure enables the provision of advanced services such as rich multimedia learning experiences to students, faculty and staff across all our campuses, and is a key strategic pillar of the future learning environment at ECU," says Elizabeth Wilson, Chief Information Officer, ECU.

"Data#3 have exceeded our expectations across every aspect of the project. Their proactive approach, professionalism and attention to detail have ensured a seamless process from start to finish. I cannot recommend them highly enough."

Data#3's Chief Executive Officer, Laurence Baynham adds, *"Helping customers to transform their business through innovative technology is central to Data#3's strategy. The success at ECU is a testament to our ongoing investment in the education sector and our reputation in the market for delivering successful outcomes through education specific services."*

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Elizabeth Wilson, Chief Information Officer,
Edith Cowan University.

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