



Instant Connectivity and 'Everywhere Learning' achieved. Extricom passes with A+ performance (unlike the competition).

Caludon Castle School was founded in 1954 as a boys' comprehensive school. It is now a co-educational comprehensive school of just under 1600 11-18 year old students with a Sixth Form of 330 pupils and 250 staff members serving North East Coventry in the UK. In September 2004 the school was designated a Business and Enterprise College, by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.



Completely rebuilt as a £24 million Private Finance Initiative (PFI) project in 2008 it is a 67 acre site offering state of the art facilities for all areas of the curriculum, underpinned by the innovative use of ICT. Each faculty has a spacious ICT room for use by students, and staff resource rooms are fully equipped with the latest technologies. Every classroom has interactive whiteboards and video streaming. Every member of staff is provided with their own laptop and the school actively encourages every faculty to use ICT to enhance the student learning experience.

With the simultaneous demands of both the student body and the staff network, the original Cisco wireless solution installed during the rebuild was faltering. The 3rd generation cell-based technology was unable to cope with concurrent connections required to get a classroom of 30 users seamlessly connected to the network without considerable delay and performance reduction. And the constant re-arrangement of the flexible seating set-up in one of the teaching halls also meant that the wireless signal became continuously intermittent.

Driven by the need to offer instant connectivity and 'everywhere learning' across the campus, Mr Paul Harvey, Assistant Headteacher at Caludon Castle decided to investigate alternative wireless solutions. The only one that made the grade? Extricom.

Finding the Right Partner

Mr Harvey explained 'My key objective was to find a wireless solution that could really deliver the technological capabilities we needed to both the student and teacher bodies. It was essential that we could simultaneously log 30 laptops onto the network at the start of a lesson with no issue. The school is keen to promote 'everywhere learning' and we needed a solution that could give guaranteed coverage to all areas of the school site'.

Other vendors were considered during the process, including both Aruba and Meru however following a

visit to the BETT Show (the world's largest education technology event) and the stand of Extricom Select Partner Solution's House, where he was taken through a live demonstration of Extricom's unique and patented Channel Blanket™ architecture in action, it became clear that the Extricom technology was the right fit for Caludon's needs.



From what I saw, I knew that the truly 4th generation 'n' solution that Extricom offered was the only technology I would consider to achieve the multiple needs at Caludon. The sheer simplicity of it, and its flexibility and scalability of access really meant it led the way in comparison to the other vendors I had investigated.

Mr Paul Harvey
Assistant Head Teacher
Caludon Castle Business &
Enterprise School

Project Scope

Bring immediate connectivity and 'everywhere learning' to a school defined by its innovative use of ICT by replacing the existing Cisco technology across the entire campus with Extricom 'n' wireless LAN.

Solution

2 x EXSW 1632c switches

1 x EXSW-800G switch

72 x EXRP-30n access points

Results

Smooth deployment with minimal ongoing maintenance and management required along with considerably improved network performance and a school able to fulfil its teaching and learning potential to the full.

The demonstration was further supported by a visit to a neighbouring site, Stoke Park School & Technology College. This school had recently deployed the Extricom solution with the Solutions House team and enabled Mr Harvey to experience the technology in action. 'From what I saw, I knew that the truly 4th generation 'n' solution that Extricom offered was the only technology I would consider to achieve the multiple needs at Caludon. The sheer simplicity of it, and its flexibility and scalability of access really meant it led the way in comparison to the other vendors I had investigated' confirmed Mr Harvey.

Flawless Deployment

A thorough site survey and the production of a detailed survey document followed. The newly developed site at Caludon Castle benefited from easily identifiable cable routes, which in turn enabled Solutions House to deploy 2 x EXSW 1632c switches, 1 x EXSW-800G switch and 72 x EXRP-30n ultra thin access points quickly and easily with no major disruption to every day operations. The installation provided guaranteed coverage across the entire campus including all classrooms, the conference rooms that form part of the Caludon Conference Centre that is used for staff meetings and 6th form learning, a theatre and even across the external playing fields of the school.

The entire deployment was carried out over the period of a week with the solution being put immediately to use by both students and staff.

Very happy with the entire installation, Mr Harvey simply described the process as 'Faultless'.



A total of 2 Channel Blankets were configured: An 802.11n-only on the 5GHz channel with a 'Caludon' user group ESSID mapped to radio 1 and a single b/g channel blanket with both CCS and Students with separate ESSID's mapped to radio 2.

'Since the installation, the wireless has taken little resource to manage and administer' said Mr Harvey. 'I'm very happy and entirely pleased with the improvement in performance over the original Cisco managed solution'.



Business & Technical Benefits

When asked to explain whether total cost of ownership or potential ROI and other cost savings were considered as part of the decision making process, he responded

'The school looked for and chose the best value solution. Extricom provided a flexible and scalable resource to give access to the school network and internet resources – what we wanted to achieve, Extricom enabled us to do'.