

# UK foreign language institution upholds reputation with implementation of unified communications solution



<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>
<b>CUSTOMER NAME</b> · Bell International
<b>LOCATION</b> · Cambridge, UK
<b>INDUSTRY</b> · Education
<b>COMPANY SIZE</b> · 190 employees
<b>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</b> · Maintain position among market leaders as a foreign language training provider · Provide customers with high quality, leading-edge facilities · Improve communications on a listed building site where mobile reception is poor
<b>NETWORK SOLUTION</b> · Cisco Unified Communications · Cisco wireless connectivity
<b>BUSINESS VALUE</b> · Ensures brand and reputation is supported and protected · Helps enhance sales and marketing activity · Provides a reliable foundation for developing and delivering future services · Easy deployment of data and voice communications across a listed, multi-building site

Bell International, a leading provider of high quality English language training and educational services worldwide, uses a Cisco Unified Communications system to deliver leading-edge facilities to customers as well as allow for the provision of further learning and communications services.

## Business Challenge

Bell International provides high quality English language training and educational services worldwide. Each year Bell helps over 100,000 students – from more than 120 countries through one of its 41 worldwide teaching centres and e-channels – primarily to learn English, and other languages. There are three Bell centres in the UK, located in Cambridge, Kent and London where around 750 students attend residential courses. Recently, Bell opened a full curriculum school at its Kent site for international and national pupils aged 12 to 17 years.

As one of the largest British-owned providers of top quality English language training, Bell has a reputation to maintain. A key element of this is the quality of the facilities it provides to customers. Those customers will often chose an institution based upon its reputation and the standard of its supporting services. Bell's previous communications infrastructure was limited in its bandwidth capacity and its ability to exchange information between the three UK sites. Some of the challenges that Bell faced include the difficulty of communications at its largest site in Kent – the 220 acre Bedgebury Estate – which covers 14 buildings. Mobile reception was poor and being able to contact staff, such as house parents

who provide pastoral care for students and who are constantly moving around the site, was difficult. In addition, the buildings at Bedgebury have listed status, making it difficult to lay data cables around the estate. Over the next few years, however, Bell plans to significantly increase its use of online and electronic learning facilities, delivering them to students quickly and at any location.

## Network Solution

To address these issues, Bell deployed a Cisco Unified Communications system comprising Cisco foundation technologies for a Wide Area Network (WAN) linking Local Area Networks (LANs) at the three UK sites, supporting in total almost 1,000 devices.



There is also Cisco wireless connectivity at the London and Kent sites, with Cambridge due to be wireless enabled soon. Staff and students are now able to use laptops and other mobile devices at any Bell location.

Bell's Cambridge campus has five buildings across two areas: one for head office operations and the others for the language school. The Kent site at Bedgebury incorporates a language centre and the international school. The other site is a single building in central London.

Cisco technology has enabled Bell to deploy VLANs (virtual LANs) over the single infrastructure so that it can segregate students accessing the Internet from Bell staff who need to access data and applications, and share information over the network. This means that students are free to use their

own laptops – over which Bell has no control – to access e-mails and the Internet, while significantly reducing the security risk to Bell's internal administration network and data. Some 95 percent of students have their own laptops. Cisco VLANs also enable Bell to manage network bandwidth so that traffic such as voice is never compromised by other traffic, such as e-mail and Internet access.

Over the Cisco infrastructure, Bell uses 80 Cisco Unified IP phones for both staff and, in public areas, students. Bell also plans to utilise the Cisco wireless network for dual-mode mobile telephony. This means that when on a Bell campus, dual-mode mobile phones can use the Cisco wireless and IP network to send and receive calls instead of relying on a more expensive cellular network.

**“We aim to provide a premium service to our customers and they expect that to include excellent facilities like WiFi, high quality accommodation and a wide and varied social programme. These kinds of features and facilities come as givens in our market and the Cisco technology certainly enables us to deliver on that expectation. We have a reputation for having highly available and up-to-date technology and when it comes to the quality and capability of the Cisco infrastructure, it certainly delivers a differentiation which we can provide to prospective students.”**

**Ian Danbury, IT Manager, Bell International**

Ian Danbury, IT Manager for Bell International in the UK, says, “Cisco is all about stability and performance. I know that when I buy Cisco products they will do exactly what it says on the tin and we will not experience any unpleasant surprises or disappointments. Also, scalability is a key issue for us; I have to be confident that the infrastructure I buy today is going to support us and what we plan to do over the next few years. With Cisco you know the solution will deliver for the long term.”

Cisco Gold Certified Partner, ONI, helped Bell develop and implement the Cisco Unified Communications system along with additional communications applications.

## PRODUCT LIST

### Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst 3750 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 3560 Series Switches
- Cisco 2851 Integrated Services Router
- Cisco 1242 Access Points
- CiscoWorks Wireless LAN Solution Engine (WLSE)

### Security and VPN

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CallManager) Version 5.1
- Cisco Unified IP Phone 7960G
- Cisco Unified IP Phone 7941G

## Business Results

“We aim to provide a premium service to our customers and they expect that to include excellent facilities like WiFi, high quality accommodation and a wide and varied social programme,” says Danbury. “These kinds of features and facilities come as givens in our market and the Cisco technology certainly enables us to deliver on that expectation. We have a reputation for having highly available and up-to-date technology and when it comes to the quality and capability of the Cisco infrastructure, it certainly delivers a differentiation which we can provide to prospective students.”



One of the key reasons for implementing the Cisco infrastructure was to create a platform upon which Bell could quickly and simply deploy additional applications and services. For example, Cisco's network helps Bell manage and improve its sales and marketing activity. The school promotes its services via three channels: direct, online, and through a network of agents based overseas. Cisco business partner ONI has developed an automatic voice recording system which allows Bell to record sales and marketing phone calls. Because both the phone system and data networks are integrated, it is simple to record phone conversations and store them on a computer. Recordings can be e-mailed easily to Bell's international agents, helping to ensure every agent presents Bell in the same way and with maximum impact.

The Cisco infrastructure also enhances the learning experience that Bell promises. It connects interactive whiteboards in classrooms so that learning collateral such as current affairs programmes can be broadcast. This type of content is used to help initiate topical conversations in English among students.

“We have a Cisco infrastructure that is hugely flexible and capable. For me it is not just about continued development for growth in terms of capacity, but is also about the extendibility of the infrastructure as the foundation for more applications and services in the future. Bell now has a robust and reliable platform upon which to deliver enhanced, ever-richer experiences to our customers,” says Danbury.

Bell plans to use the Cisco infrastructure to deliver a range of online learning tools such as virtual learning environments and areas for students and tutors to share and exchange study material.

Danbury concludes, “The Cisco LAN, WAN, and IP telephony systems are vital to the day-to-day operation of Bell. But from our customers' point of view – our students and pupils – they don't actually know very much about the network infrastructure. They only need to understand that it's there and it works. I think that transparency speaks volumes in terms of the strength of the Cisco infrastructure we have deployed.”



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