

Edinburgh College of Art improves student-centric learning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CUSTOMER NAME · Edinburgh College of Art
LOCATION · Edinburgh, Scotland
INDUSTRY · Education
COMPANY SIZE · 500 employees and 1,700 students
BUSINESS CHALLENGE · Provide better access to teaching and learning information · Improve student-lecturer communication · Develop a more modern approach to education
NETWORK SOLUTION · Cisco foundation network technologies · Cisco Unified Communications
BUSINESS VALUE · Enables education to be more student-centric · Encourages greater interaction and collaboration between students and staff · Makes it faster and easier for students to contact lecturers · Reduces telephony costs · Improves campus management and security



Edinburgh College of Art adopts the Cisco Connected Learning strategy to improve learning and information access, thereby strengthening its global reputation for innovation and excellence.

Business Challenge

Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) is more than a hundred years old and in that time has established a worldwide reputation as one of the most successful independent art colleges. Around 22 percent of students come from more than 70 countries around the world. Some of the College's alumni include the famous sculptor, Eduardo Paolozzi, and Sir Nicholas Grimshaw who is President of the Royal Academy. Former student, Stewart Parvin, is now Royal Dressmaker to Her Majesty the Queen. Staff at ECA are practising artists, designers, architects, curators and writers, many with international reputations.

ECA took over a new building next to its existing central Edinburgh campus so it could bring all departments and facilities on to a single campus. Being a new site with regard to data and communications networking prompted the College to review its existing infrastructure which had become dated and unable to support its needs and those of its students. ECA's vision was to make information easier to access, and align it with the way students and staff learn and teach. ECA also wanted to help students communicate and interact with one another and with lecturers in order to share information and knowledge more effectively.

Stuart McFarlane, Head of IT Services for Edinburgh College of Art, says, "We felt it was much more conducive to teaching and learning to break away from the idea of just having static computers and instead give students and staff the capability to access and share information and learning facilities anywhere, especially where they work."

Network Solution

ECA has adopted a Cisco Connected Learning strategy which involves a step-by-step approach to making the institution more student-centric. The first part of this has been to deploy Cisco foundation networking technologies to create a Local Area Network (LAN) at the new campus building. Across the rest of the campus, comprising four additional buildings, ECA has refreshed its existing LAN.



As well as updating the infrastructure, the new strategy enabled ECA to create a network that supports a Cisco Unified Communications system and wireless connectivity for the entire campus. This new system supports around 200 Cisco Unified IP phones used in administration and staff offices. ECA also uses Cisco Unity for integrated messaging.

The Cisco infrastructure has around 650 computers and, specifically for design students, Apple computers. It also enables students and staff to use their laptops

anywhere on campus. Some of the disciplines at ECA, such as computer-aided design (CAD) for design and architecture; multimedia for animation, film and TV; and digital photography now demand high-bandwidth networks to share and communicate projects and student work. The network backbone capacity is 1 gigabit per second, with 100 megabits per second delivered to the desktop. The Cisco architecture is a scalable solution that will allow ECA to easily increase backbone capability to 10 gigabits per second as application demand increases.

The Cisco network infrastructure and Cisco Unified Communications system at ECA was implemented by Affiniti, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner.

Business Results

“Cisco Connected Learning is all about supporting the way students work and staff teach,” says McFarlane. “We’re an art college and students and staff tend to spend most of their time in the studio. But they still need to access information for research and the Cisco technology brings that access right at the point where it is needed – whether that is into the studio or anywhere across the campus.”

With the foundation infrastructure in place, the Cisco Connected Learning approach helps ECA introduce additional innovations. ECA has started to use Moodle – open source software that facilitates collaborative learning – to create an electronic environment where staff and students can interact and share information. Students use the network to access their own workspace, electronic libraries, and share and discuss work with lecturers and other students.

During ECA’s recent centenary celebrations, a live video stream of a presentation by the director of the National Galleries of Scotland was distributed across the campus over the Cisco network. The Cisco infrastructure also means that ECA can look at other ways to offer collaboration and social networking, such as podcasts and the opportunity for students to design and develop new approaches to learning.

“The communications infrastructure we have developed using Cisco is vital to an institution such as ECA. A key tenet of our reputation is the high calibre of students – especially internationally – that we can attract and to do that you have to have the best possible facilities. One of those is a high quality IT infrastructure. Students, and indeed our staff, expect it and with Cisco we can deliver it.”

Stuart McFarlane, Head of IT Services, Edinburgh College of Art



With the Cisco Unified Communications system staff, who are seldom in their offices, are much easier to contact. With Cisco's messaging system, any message – whether voice or e-mail – can be accessed from either a phone, a desktop computer, or a laptop. As part of the development and further utilisation of the Cisco infrastructure, ECA is looking at combining its Cisco Unified Communications system with a wireless network so staff can carry wireless phones around the campus and remain

contactable should students need to speak with them.

ECA has a reputation for fostering arts in Scotland and one of the ways in which Cisco is helping the College do this is by using technology to bring arts information and educational material to more remote parts of the country. ECA has a research group called Docspace which uses the Cisco network to broadcast arts-related documentaries followed by live interviews with its directors to students, as well as other educational institutions and art centres around Scotland.

In addition to supporting education, the Cisco network also helps ECA manage its campus by carrying footage from security CCTV cameras located around the site and using the network to manage door access. Cisco's real-time wireless monitoring capability further enhances security because McFarlane can watch who accesses the wireless network at any time and any place on the campus.

"The communications infrastructure we have developed using Cisco is vital to an institution such as ECA. A key tenet of our reputation is the high calibre of students – especially internationally – that we can attract and to do that you have to have the best possible facilities. One of those is a high quality IT infrastructure. Students, and indeed our staff, expect it and with Cisco we can deliver it," says McFarlane.

PRODUCT LIST

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst 3750 Series Switches
- Cisco 4400 Series Wireless LAN Controllers
- Cisco Aironet 1000 Series

Voice and IP Communications

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CallManager) 4.1
- Cisco Unified IP Phones 7900 Series
- Cisco Unity



Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA 95134-1706
USA
www.cisco.com
Tel: 408 526-4000
800 553-NETS (6387)
Fax: 408 527-0883

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
168 Robinson Road
#28-01 Capital Tower
Singapore 068912
www.cisco.com
Tel: +65 6317 7777
Fax: +65 6317 7799

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV
Haarlerbergpark
Haarlerbergweg 13-19
1101 CH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www-europe.cisco.com
Tel: +31 0 800 020 0791
Fax: +31 0 20 357 1100

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at www.cisco.com/go/offices.

©2008 Cisco Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. CCVP, the Cisco Logo, and the Cisco Square Bridge logo are trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc.; Changing the Way We Work, Live, Play, and Learn is a service mark of Cisco Systems, Inc.; and Access Registrar, Aironet, BPX, Catalyst, CCDA, CCDP, CCIE, CCIP, CCNA, CCNP, CCSP, Cisco, the Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert logo, Cisco IOS, Cisco Press, Cisco Systems, Cisco Systems Capital, the Cisco Systems logo, Cisco Unity, Enterprise/Solver, EtherChannel, EtherFast, EtherSwitch, Fast Step, Follow Me Browsing, FormShare, GigaDrive, GigaStack, HomeLink, Internet Quotient, IOS, IP/TV, iQ Expertise, the iQ logo, iQ Net Readiness Scorecard, iQuick Study, LightStream, Linksys, MeetingPlace, MGX, Networking Academy, Network Registrar, Packet, PIX, ProConnect, RateMUX, ScriptShare, SlideCast, SMARTnet, StackWise, The Fastest Way to Increase Your Internet Quotient, and TransPath are registered trademarks of Cisco Systems, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and certain other countries.

All other trademarks mentioned in this document or Website are the property of their respective owners. The use of the word partner does not imply a partnership relationship between Cisco and any other company. (0609R)
The Print Consultancy (01483 771211) / Sept 08

Printed in the UK