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Cisco Helps Watford Football Club Transform Vicarage Road Stadium with One of Europe's Most Advanced Information Networks

Cisco Technologies to Enhance Fans' Experience, Reduce Costs and Improve Venue Management

LONDON - June 20, 2007— Watford Football Club, founded more than a century ago, is building one of the most advanced voice, video and data communication systems ever deployed at a European sports venue. Based on Cisco technologies, the network will help deliver a massive 10 gigabits per second to every part of the club's Vicarage Road stadium. The fixed and wireless network supports a Cisco Unified Communications system, video streaming and a Cisco Connected Real Estate solution. The network is expected to transform the experience for club fans and corporate visitors using Vicarage Road, as well as helping deliver significant cost savings and efficiency improvements in venue management.

The Cisco network infrastructure has been installed and is already supporting a smartcard system used by fans so they can get through turnstiles much faster and use the cards for purchases at the ground. It will soon also support access to a range of other potential services such as video-on-demand in corporate boxes and access to team and match information. When integrated with the club's customer relationship management system via the Cisco network, the smartcard system will provide club management with invaluable information about fans so staff can provide services that are better aligned to fans' preferences and offer more sophisticated loyalty reward schemes. On match days, stewards will use mobile devices, which communicate via the Cisco wireless network, to view real-time video for better crowd monitoring and control and for providing on-the-spot information to visitors.

The Cisco network is also expected to help the club increase the revenue potential of Vicarage Road out-of-season by making the stadium a highly advanced corporate event venue offering a wide range of business communications services such as flexible video conferencing facilities and wireless networking. The club also plans to integrate all of the venue's building management systems across the Cisco network so services such as lighting, heating, closed-circuit television security and digital signage can be managed centrally and more economically.

Watford FC's head of new projects, Katie Wareham, said, "Watford FC doesn't have the financial clout of the top UK and international football clubs and yet we have deployed what we believe is the most powerful and fastest communications network of any sports venue in Europe. The Cisco solution means we can give fans a host of innovative services that transform their experience when visiting Vicarage Road and increase revenue potential outside the football season. And we have an infrastructure that is more than capable of supporting additional services and applications for at least the next 10 years."

The Cisco solution is part of a £32.5million redevelopment of the Vicarage Road venue to improve access, seating, corporate hospitality and a range of other facilities that the club hopes will also improve the stadium as a centre for the local community.

The Cisco infrastructure at the Vicarage Road stadium is based upon [Cisco Catalyst® 6500 Series Switches](#) and [Cisco Catalyst 3750E](#) and [Cisco Catalyst 3560E Series Switches](#). The Cisco wireless network uses [Cisco Aironet® 1130 AG Access Points](#). The Cisco network infrastructure is highly resilient as the architecture has no single point of failure anywhere around the stadium. The Cisco Unified Communications system comprises 140 Cisco Unified IP Phones around the stadium which will provide sophisticated telephony services such as video conferencing and the delivery of real-time information to handset displays. The Cisco solution is being deployed at Watford FC by The Project Network, a Cisco SMB Select Partner, and Fortress GB is delivering the smartcard system.

“Watford FC and its Vicarage Road ground have a proud and colourful history and it is now leading the way as one of the most innovative and connected sporting venues in Europe,” said David Meads, director of UK Commercial Mid Market, Cisco. “By using the network as a platform, Watford FC will be able to improve customer service, offer new services to fans, control building management costs and increase revenue opportunities.”

About Watford FC

Watford FC was founded in 1881. Since its formation, the club has played in all of the leagues that host full-time professional football in England and Wales. The club repurchased the freehold of the Vicarage Road stadium in 2005 - the Vic has been Watford’s home and HQ for the last 83 years.

Watford FC has just celebrated its 125th anniversary during the 2006-07 season and will line-up in the Coca-Cola Championship next season. Watford FC’s parent company – Watford Leisure PLC – is listed on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM). It joined AIM in August 2001.

For further information about Watford FC please visit the official website at www.watfordfc.com

About Cisco Systems

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