



Monash provides world-class wired and wireless network learning environment with Cisco high-touch network optimisation service

“Cisco’s High-Touch Operations Management service bridges the gap between the Cisco Smart Net Total Care service, the Technical Assistance Centre and our network management team, reducing the effort fixing problems and releasing staff time to add value to the business.”

– Tim Abbott, Network Operations Manager, Monash University

Monash University is one of Australia’s leading universities. Founded in 1958, it has eight campuses – six in Victoria, one in Malaysia and one in South Africa, study centres in China, India, and Italy as well as an alliance with the University of Warwick. Monash enrolls approximately 46,000 undergraduate and 17,000 graduate students each year, making it the university with the largest student body in Australia.

A central IT department manages the university’s corporate networks and IT services for finance, human resources, and student management. It also manages IT requirements for faculties as well as research and learning facilities.

Critical business issue

Monash University implemented its Cisco network in 2003 to provide enterprise-grade network infrastructure services for students, researchers and staff across its domestic campuses. To support and promote excellent service delivery, Monash requires its network to be highly scalable, reliable, and robust enough to enable an ‘any device, anytime, anywhere and to anyone’ service.

“The average student brings two to three mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops to campus, which they use in lectures and other learning environments on campus, for studying and to connect to university services,” says Tim Abbott, Network Operations Manager, Monash University.

“Professional staff, teaching staff and researchers use these devices in the course of their working day. The wired and wireless network that supports these services is a large, complex enterprise system and it has to connect everyone, regardless of which campus they’re on.”

What Monash University required

The university’s IT department relied on Cisco’s Smart Net Total Care service, which provides extensive inventory and contract management and gives direct, anytime access to Cisco engineers and the Technical Assistance Centre. However, Monash required a higher level service to protect its essential operations. In particular, it needed personalised operational attention and support to provide faster incident resolution for the most complex network issues.

“We needed a single point of contact who could drive and expedite our high-priority issues, providing us with a personalised response and understanding of our specific requirements of a university network infrastructure,” says Abbott. “The Cisco contact had to have high-level Cisco expertise to provide escalation services for business-critical issues. We also wanted someone who could help analyse the network as a strategic asset and provide proactive planning advice.”



What it implemented

In October 2011, Monash University employed Cisco's High-Touch Operations Management (HTOM) service. This premium operational and technical support service delivers comprehensive management of network issues and priority access to Cisco support resources.

Monash's dedicated Cisco High-Touch Operations Manager, monitors the university's technical support needs, tracks service requests and resolves process issues quickly and effectively.

"I'm part of a team that provides Monash with personalised, high-touch access to our network and operations specialists," says Vlad Belkind, High-Touch Operations Manager, Cisco. "It's my job to resolve network issues and identify measures to prevent them from recurring."

As part of the HTOM service, Cisco provides Monash University with:

- personalised operational support during business hour
- ongoing service request and escalation management
- periodic conference calls to report on and expedite issue resolution
- monthly and quarterly reports on the status of Monash's service requests and business objectives

"Having the HTOM service on top of our regular Smart Net Total Care service gives us a high level of service and confidence. It provides a clear insight into the service level KPI's and augments the supplier performance management." says Gerard Lyons, Category Manager.

The outcomes for Monash University

1. Faster problem resolution

Cisco's High-Touch Operation Manager provides support to Monash's IT department when something unplanned happens on the network, resulting in quick response to avoid or minimise the impact of network issues on students and staff. According to Abbott the university's IT department has reduced problem resolution time through faster troubleshooting by the High-Touch Operations Manager.

Since the HTOM service was introduced in October 2011, the average time to final resolution of network service requests has decreased significantly. In Q3 2011, before HTOM was introduced, average time to final resolution was 35 days. In Q1 2012, mean time dropped to 15 days. Sixty-five percent of all cases are now resolved within 10 days.

2. Increased IT department productivity

"With our High-Touch Operations Manager working on network issues and analysis, we have more time to devote to providing value-added services," says Abbott. "It gives us great peace of mind having Vlad as our single point of contact for all operational and process-related issues. He acts as our go-between with the Cisco business units and takes a hands-on approach to organising regular review meetings. It gives us confidence to know that issues are being addressed quickly and efficiently."

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Smart Net Total Care
Cisco High-Touch Operations Management service
Cisco Catalyst switching and wireless networking
Data Centre: Cisco Nexus and storage switching
Collaboration: Cisco Unified Communications and Video

3. Creating a world-class learning and research environment

The most important outcome of increased network stability is that it provides Monash with a strong foundation for its world-class learning and research environment.

“Students can bring their mobile devices to lectures and tutorials and be confident of accessing the information and services they require, quickly and securely, through the university’s wireless broadband network,” says Belkind. “Research departments can be reassured by the fact that their data is available whenever they need it. Essentially, Cisco’s HTOM service is helping Monash retain its position as one of the world’s leading universities.”

For more information

To find out more, go to :
 Cisco Smart Net Total Care: www.cisco.com/go/total
 High Touch Operations Management: www.cisco.com/go/fts

Corporate Headquarters
 Cisco Systems, Inc.
 170 West Tasman Drive
 San Jose, CA 95134-1706
 USA
 Tel: 408 526 4000
 800 553 NETS (6387)
 Fax: 408 526 4100

Asia Pacific Headquarters
 Cisco Systems, Inc.
 168 Robinson Road
 Capital Tower
 #26-01 to #29-01
 Singapore 068912
 Tel: +65 6317 7777
 Fax: +65 6317 7799

Japan Office
 Cisco Systems K.K.
 Tokyo Akasaka (Headquarters)
 Kokusai Shin-Akasaka Building
 2-14-27 Akasaka
 Minato-Ku, Tokyo
 107-0052 Japan
 Tel: +81 3 5549 6500
 Fax: +81 3 5549 6501

Australia Head Office
 Cisco Systems Australia Pty Ltd.
 Level 10, 80 Pacific Highway
 North Sydney, NSW 2060
 Australia
 Tel: +61 2 8446 6000
 Fax: +61 2 8446 8400

Cisco Systems has more than 200 offices around the world. Addresses, phone numbers and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco website at www.cisco.com

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