

Canyons School District Enhances Their Educational Environment by Delivering High Performance Wi-Fi



Canyons School District is focused on supplying students and staff with the technology needed to encourage and help every student prepare for college and a career in today's fast-paced, technology-based work environment.

Formed in 2008, Canyons is the first new school district to be created in Utah in nearly a century. The district has grown to approximately 33,000 students across 45 schools, all striving for academic excellence.

Canyons has always been a progressive district, consistently keeping up with the newest trends in technology and education. From online testing to training labs and e-learning platforms, Canyons has always been a quick adopter of new technologies. When their legacy access points could no longer provide a robust enough network to support the enormous influx of wireless applications and devices, Canyons began the search for an enterprise-grade wireless system that could keep up with their growing demands and supply a reliable connection for anywhere, anytime education district-wide. After reviewing several products on the market and conducting extensive testing, the IT staff at Canyons chose to deploy Xirrus Wireless Arrays district wide. Any other wireless solution would have required 3X more time to deploy and 4X more cable pulls and switch ports.

Providing More For Less

The Xirrus solution offered Canyons School District the ability to provide a large coverage footprint with fewer devices than any other Wi-Fi vendor, while still offering reliable and secure connectivity for learning applications. Xirrus' proven track record of providing ample bandwidth and coverage using less cabling, switch ports, and installation time was an attractive concept for Canyons. "Our ability to cover the school with fewer devices was what really caught our attention," said Dean Glanville, Director of Technology Architecture at Canyons School District. "We had looked at another vendor's solution and they needed close to 100 access points in one of our high schools to provide the coverage we were looking for. The cost was just prohibitive to install all those devices. That school has now been installed with Xirrus devices and it was a fraction of that. We installed about 34 Xirrus Arrays as opposed to the hundred Access Points the competitors required. It just made sense from a cost perspective."

Requirements

- Pervasive coverage throughout all school buildings
- Ample bandwidth to support e-learning platforms
- Quick installation with minimum number of devices and cable pulls

Solution

- Improved user density and throughput with 4 to 16 radios per Array
- Easier installation and network integration with on-board switch, firewall, and management
- Greater coverage with high-gain directional antennas

Benefits

- Xirrus used 65% fewer devices and cabling than any other offering
- Achieved cost-effective and reliable high-performance Wi-Fi
- Delivered pervasive Wi-Fi connectivity for students and faculty
- Offered the capability to centrally manage the network from one management screen

The Xirrus Wireless Array integrates up to 16 radios paired with high-gain directional antennas, a multi-gigabit switch, controller, firewall, and threat sensor into a single device. This unique architecture not only allows Canyons School District to reach their coverage requirements with fewer devices, but it also allows them to get a large number of students online simultaneously. "We wanted to see this work with 90 computers all in classrooms... we figured that's probably a pretty good test" said Dean. "We then said 'what's the worst thing we could do?' So we started running videos. At one point in time we had 90 computers all streaming various videos from the Internet and off of locally hosted things... really just trying to break the Xirrus system – and it just worked."

The Xirrus Advantage

With the explosion of smartphones and tablets, mobility has become ubiquitous. People expect to connect wirelessly. Organizations depend on high-bandwidth to send and receive voice, video and data, from any device to any one. And no one delivers better than Xirrus. Our array-based solutions are unique. They draw from cellular tower design principles to provide wired-like reliability, increased user density and capacity plus superior security. They perform under the most demanding conditions and have lower infrastructure requirements. When integrated with business and IT objectives, they help you do more than ever before.

At Xirrus, we apply the "best practices" of wired networking to wireless infrastructures by distributing the intelligence to the edge and outfitting the Array with dense multistate radios in the same manner as a wired switch. That's how Xirrus delivers the best performing, most scalable wireless solutions in the industry. It's a strategic IT infrastructure advantage that fuels organizations. Because Xirrus does wireless networks right.



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DEAN GLANVILLE,
Director of Technology Architecture
at Canyons School District



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