

Trafford College Brings Learning to a New Level with Xirrus Wireless Arrays



With over 10,000 students across four sites, Trafford College has placed itself firmly on the map as one of the leading providers of education and training in Greater Manchester, offering responsive provision that meets the needs of young people, adults, and employers alike. Trafford College is proud to have been recognised as 'outstanding' by Ofsted and to hold Beacon status, awarded only to the top 8% of Colleges nationally on the basis of their student results. The College has also been awarded National Skills Academy status for excellence in Retail, Sport & Active Leisure, Environmental Technologies, and Hospitality.

Trafford College recently launched their new facility at Altrincham, a £25 million project consisting of a specialist A Level Centre, a contemporary new Library, state-of-the-art classrooms, and a three-story modern atrium. It was essential to Trafford College that this new, modern facility also offered the latest in advanced technologies. The first step in achieving this goal was installing Xirrus high performance Wireless Arrays to provide high bandwidth access for students and staff while maximizing their technology investment.



Trafford College

Originally two separate FE Colleges, North Trafford & South Trafford merged in 2007 to form "Trafford College."

Requirements

- High bandwidth coverage for mobile learning aids
- Ample bandwidth to support e-learning platforms
- Quick installation with minimum number of devices and cable pulls

Solution

- Support for hundreds of users with 4 to 16 radios per Array
- Distributed intelligence in each Array with built-in Wi-Fi controller
- 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

Improving Mobile Teaching Aids with Reliable Wireless

Trafford College required a reliable wireless network that could provide sufficient bandwidth to support not only the mobile teaching aids implemented by the school, but also the devices brought into the classrooms by the students. Steve Pratten, ICT Team Leader at Trafford College explains the school's decision to deploy Xirrus Wireless Arrays, "Extensive research was carried out on several Wi-Fi providers and technologies, but it was Xirrus that impressed us the most. What stood out at the initial meeting with Xirrus was the absolute confidence in their product. We needed a solution that would be able to cope with the rising number of smart phones used by our students together with the many mobile classrooms that are in use throughout the new building. Xirrus proved to be that solution – since the system was deployed we have received positive feedback and no complaints."

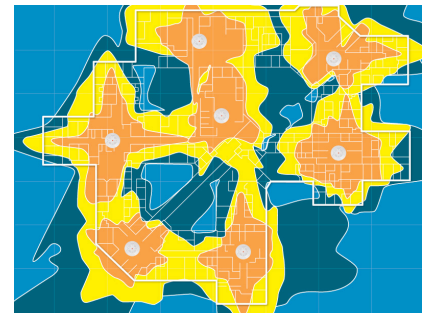
By choosing Xirrus, Trafford was able to cover the new facility and the refectory using fewer devices, cable runs, and switch ports, resulting in a significantly reduced implementation cost. Additionally, having a stable wireless network has enabled Trafford College to increase the number of mobile teaching aids used in the classroom, and has allowed the teachers to administer exams online with complete confidence in the security and reliability of the network.

"I would highly recommend Xirrus to others," Pratten continued. "I have had two minor configuration issues which needed a support call to Xirrus. These issues were quickly resolved from the excellent support team. Their extensive knowledge and helpful manner are a welcome change from the many other call centres we usually deal with. The product is very easy to manage, support requests are dealt with swiftly and, above all, we now have a Wi-Fi solution the College can be proud of."

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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STEVE PRATTEN,
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