Extreme Networks supporting excellence
at Our Lady of Mercy College

Our Lady of Mercy College's network had evolved over time to include switches from three vendors and was running on a backbone of two separate fibre links. The updating of this ageing environment needed to address the inherent risk of failure.

Network redundancy was to be added so that, should a fault occur anywhere on the campus, an alternative path could be routed to keep services running. The project was to also leverage the financial and support benefits of standardising with equipment from a single vendor.

OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE PARRAMATTA

Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC), Parramatta, is an independent Catholic day school for girls. Its strategic improvement plan, 'Transforming Towards 2020', provides a framework that furthers the College's commitment to excellence in education.

The focus is on students' learning experiences and wellbeing, as well as ensuring staff professional and personal competencies are continuously enhanced.

THE CHALLENGE

OLMC has a 1-to-1 notebook policy for all 1,000 students and 135 staff at the College. The 55 classrooms in five buildings across the campus are linked by seven networking distribution points. There are currently 1,250 wireless devices in use throughout the campus on any given day.

"All classroom pedagogy relies on being connected. It was critical that our underlying network was robust and fast enough to support our traffic demands," Scott Johnston, Information Technology Manager at OLMC, said.

The determination was to consolidate on an advanced networking platform capable of servicing the current and future requirements of the school.

"All classroom pedagogy relies on being connected. Our underlying network had to be robust and fast enough to support all our wireless traffic. A new, consolidated platform was to service the current and expanding requirements of the College."

Scott Johnston
IT Manager,
Our Lady of Mercy College

AT A GLANCE

THE CHALLENGE

A network refresh project to support the excellence in education drivers at OLMC. Its 1-to-1 notebook policy and classroom pedagogy rely on having a fast, robust environment.

THE SOLUTION

Simple to manage and expand Extreme Network software-driven enterprise networking solution.

THE BENEFITS

- Extreme Networks components trouble free
- Value for money both up front and in longer term
- OLMC leveraging flexibility inherent in its network
- Automatic upgrades keep the network current in a consistent, disciplined way

THE PRODUCTS

- ExtremeSwitching
- ExtremeAnalytics
- ExtremeControl

THE SOLUTION

Scott Johnston and the IT team at Our Lady of Mercy College had shortlisted two well known network vendors to fulfil its network refresh when CompNow suggested adding Extreme Networks for assessment.

"CompNow demonstrated to us that Extreme Networks' advanced, software-driven technology was not only what we needed, but it could be delivered at a very competitive price," Scott said.

The wireless environment is dependent on HP Aruba switching gear, which was to be connected to the Extreme Networks solution.

For OLMC, the differentiator of the Extreme Networks option was its core infrastructure - four individual switches are joined to form a primary switch, rather than a chassis-based modular core. "The advantage for us here is that it's a straightforward task to add switches as more ports – such as File Service Protocol (FSP) ports - are required into the future," Scott said.

THE BENEFITS

Scott Johnston confirms that the Extreme Networks / CompNow choice was "a simple decision to make with up front costs significantly cheaper than the nearest bid". In value for money, the Extreme Networks solution saved OLMC

30 percent and was then offered on a highly affordable further 2-year licence – counter to other 3-year support options OLMC received.

The future needs scenario from the network is being fulfilled. Since the upgrade project in 2016, OLMC opened a new building in 2017 which required an expansion of the networking structure and two further switches were added in 2018. All of which was simplified by Extreme: "From the cutover we didn't need much contact with CompNow because our Extreme Networks just works. I was able to very easily upgrade the switch firmware myself," Scott said.

Recently, however, OLMC commissioned CompNow's managed services. Its engineers "make sure we are kept current, in a consistent, disciplined way," Scott says. "It frees us from infrastructure to do the more important face to face work within the College, supporting teaching and learning and our Towards 2020 drivers".

Extreme™
Customer-Driven Networking