CASE STUDY

ARUBA NETWORKS WINS PRAISE FROM UAE SCHOOL GROUP

táaleem
inspiring young minds

Using mobile devices for creating personalised work plans and administering schools is just the start of the benefits of adopting wireless networking by Aruba Networks at Taaleem, a pre-school, primary and secondary school provider based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). Taaleem – which means 'Education' in Arabic – presently has a portfolio of six schools and four early childhood facilities in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Aruba's technology enables Taaleem schools to embed enhanced information and communication technology (ICT) into every aspect of the academic curriculum, both indoors and outdoors and across the entire campus. This includes classroom teaching and assessment, internal and external messaging, homework assignments and extra-curricular activities.

"Offering wireless access in every classroom offers teachers and students the opportunity to use different wireless access devices and take full advantage of mobile learning applications,' explains Ramm Prakash, Taaleem's assistant IT manager. "Wireless access is used day-to-day by teachers, students and staff, and it also facilitates videos via iPads, Apple TV and Wi-Fi projectors and the sharing of online learning content."

"It allows people to communicate more effectively and timely and be more mobile because it creates a continuum that picks up sessions across different access points at a campus, at any time required."

BENEFITS

- Students become familiar with modern technology at an early age
- Helps teachers identify specific areas for further attention
- Promotes parental involvement in education
- Facilitates the sharing of best practices by teaching staff

Ramm Prakash said that Taaleem recognized that it needed enhanced blanket wireless coverage to ensure that any wireless device could be accessed anywhere at a campus, despite the density of access at a certain time or in a certain area. This also included the need for comprehensive management tools and broad options for access control and authentication.

Integrated security was also required to preserve network integrity, privacy and safety. This has grown to be far more important over the recent years with the introduction of bring-your-own-device (BYOD) initiatives.

Taaleem's schools were outfitted with Aruba Networks' Aruba 3000 series Mobility Controllers and AP-90 series access points (APs) for Wi-Fi.

"This is one of the first major educational Wi-Fi projects in the UAE," says Shabir Ahamed, director at Precedence Technologies, a leading system integrator in the UAE and an Aruba Gold Partner who designed and installed the new Wi-Fi infrastructure.

"Taaleem already had some Wi-Fi but wanted a longer term, sustainable solution," Ahamed adds. "Despite stiff competition, Aruba won for reliability, integrated security, and ease of network management. Aruba also has a lot of experience in the education sector."

Taaleem's new network is a major step forward in pedagogic practice, allowing it to merge technology into the day-to-day classroom experience and eliminate stand-alone computer labs. Its schools offer access to vast amounts of online resources that students learn how to handle, filter and evaluate.

In addition, Aruba's wireless technology helps teachers create individual work plans for students. This increases students' motivation and learning potential while allowing teachers to promote the key skills of collaboration and teamwork.

Teachers can now continually assess students with minimal intrusion, and schools can keep records of achievement for analysis. Wi-Fi technology also helps keep parents informed and engaged with their child's activities and progress. Plus, it enables teachers from different Taaleem schools to share best practices.

Prakash says that while the wireless installation was challenging from a logistical point of view, the setup was amazingly simple. He noted that the Aruba Wi-Fi infrastructure automatically adjusts to accommodate user behavior, interference and nearby networks.

The result is Wi-Fi access that is as stable and reliable as the wired network, with improved security. This has enabled new applications and services to be made available wirelessly. In addition, Aruba's implementation of role-based security policies has saved technical staff time.

That's not to say there weren't challenges to overcome — with Aruba's help, of course. Prakash says that a key project was enabling BYOD so that Taaleem's staff and students could connect their own laptops, tablets and smartphones.

"We look carefully at BYOD because some people are not aware that their devices can be affected by malware," he says. "We control it by examining every personally owned device before it connects. If we can't examine a device, we have to firewall it."

Ahamed adds that another challenge faced by many schools — especially in the Gulf region, where telecommunication is expensive — is correctly estimating bandwidth needs. "The technology is changing, the bandwidth needs are changing, and the technology solution needs to keep up with that change," he says.

"Schools usually say they don't need so much bandwidth," he continues. "But in two years' time everything will be completely different. By then, it'll probably be 10 Gbps at minimum."

Prakash agrees. "Schools require heavy data transfers, especially for projection," he says, adding that deploying wireless and BYOD means it is also vital to keep up with bandwidth requirements. "We have created VLANs so we can monitor and analyze the Wi-Fi system in order to resolve any problems."

www.taaleem.ae/

ABOUT ARUBA NETWORKS

Aruba Networks (NASDAQ:ARUN) is a leading provider of next-generation network access solutions for the mobile enterprise. Its Mobile Virtual Enterprise (MOVE) architecture unifies wired and wireless network infrastructures into one seamless access solution, enabling entities of all sizes to securely address the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) phenomenon, dramatically improving productivity and lowering capital and operational costs.

Based in Sunnyvale, California, Aruba has operations throughout the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific regions.

To learn more, visit http://www.arubanetworks.com or get real-time updates on Twitter and Facebook. For the latest technical discussions on mobility and related solutions, visit Airheads Social at http://community.arubanetworks.com.

TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYED:
- Aruba 3200, 34003 and 36002 Mobility Controllers
- AP-92 and AP-93 access points
- Access policies and security based on user identity
- Multivendor, multisite network management

PRE-SCHOOLS (KINDERGARTEN), DUBAI

The Children's Garden, Green Community

The Children's Garden, Jumeira 2

The Children's Garden, Al Barsha 2

SCHOOLS, DUBAI

Al-Mizhar American Academy, Mirdif Area, Al Mizhar 1

Dubai British School, Emirates Hills, The Springs

Dubai British Foundation, Jumeirah Islands

Greenfield Community School, Dubai Investments Park

Jumeira Baccalaureate School, Jumeira 1

Uptown School, Mirdif

SCHOOLS, ABU DHABI

Raha International School, Khalifa City 'A', Al Raha Gardens

1344 CROSSMAN AVE | SUNNYVALE, CA 94089
1.866.55.ARUBA | T: 1.408.227.4500 | FAX: 1.408.227.4550 | INFO@ARUBANETWORKS.COM

www.arubanetworks.com

CS_Taleem_051614