

YORK REGION CENTRALIZES CONTROL OF 1:1 BYOD WITH CLEARPASS ACCESS MANAGEMENT



With 131,000 users and over 190,000 registered devices making 700,000 authentication requests daily, Andy Bischoff needed a better way to manage wireless traffic and devices.

"The Microsoft IAS server used for student and teacher authentication was being overwhelmed," says the Manager of Network Services for the York Region District School Board, which supports over 200 school buildings serving 120,000 preK-12 students and 11,000 employees. "I had to restart IAS services mid-day, every day, just to keep things running."

Beyond the existing traffic load, the Ontario, Canada, district faced an expected rise in WLAN traffic to 300,000 devices per day as the district began moving its 1:1 computing initiative to the next level – mandatory student BYOD.

Although it would be phased-in over several years, the program called for every student to bring a laptop or a tablet to school, with the district supplying loaners for students when needed. Further, instructors and staff at BYOD schools would be issued tablets, making wireless integral to everyday teaching and learning.

NEW MANAGEMENT DYNAMICS

With these new classroom dynamics came the imperative for York's existing WLAN to handle more network traffic at a higher level of reliability than in the past. Fortunately, York already had a robust, reliable Aruba wireless network comprised of 5200 access points, 200 mobility controllers and two AirWave network management servers.

But, the district needed a more advanced wireless network access management solution.

As a solution, York added Aruba's ClearPass Access Management System. From one integrated platform, network-agnostic ClearPass could manage network policies, securely onboard and manage devices, admit guest users, and even secure, distribute and manage mobile apps.

BENEFITS:

- Supports secure 1:1 student BYOD with 300,000 unique devices expected daily.
- Adopted Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager to provide centralized network control and role-based access.
- Deployed 5200 APs, 200 Mobility Controllers and two AirWave Servers for a ubiquitous high-performance, reliable wireless network.
- Enables implementation of ClearPass Guest to create sponsor-based guest Wi-Fi service.
- Planned ClearPass Onboard deployment for self-service onboarding of BYOD devices.



"With ClearPass, we can easily place users and devices into specific roles as we move to district-wide student BYOD. This adds wireless security features that we lacked, previously."

*– Andy Bischoff,
Manager of Network Services,
York Region District School Board*

To begin, York deployed ClearPass Policy Manager. "I appreciate the visibility ClearPass Policy Manager provides," Bischoff says. "The dashboard supplies a quick, at-a-glance overview of the state of the nation, with a graphical view of all access requests and any alerts."

"Also," Bischoff continues, "the access tracker enables fast resolution of end-user connection complaints because the tool provides detailed information regarding the reason for connection issues."

What's more, ClearPass Policy Manager furnishes Bischoff with the ability to implement role-based security. "Before, all students were in one generic role," he says. "Now, I have the ability to profile users and devices to place them in very specific roles. This adds a great deal of security that we lacked, previously."

STREAMLINING SECURE ACCESS

The ability to restrict wireless network access based on Microsoft Active Directory credentials is another ClearPass feature Bischoff appreciates.

"It's a great benefit because we use current Active Directory roles rather than creating new ones," he says. "This streamlines administrative tasks for assigning roles. And, moving forward, we hope to create even more granular roles that ClearPass Policy Manager will help to enforce."

Other important features of Aruba and ClearPass Policy Manager for York are automated device onboarding, support for existing curriculum technologies and seamless integration with other networking infrastructure.

"With over 200 controllers and three Web servers integration was a key factor in our decision," Bischoff says.

Additionally, ClearPass Policy Manager gives York the option to leverage Aruba's AirGroup functionality for role-based usage of Apple's AirPlay and AirPrint wireless connectivity on mobile devices. "This permits us to move our AirPlay-enabled Apple TV digital media receivers from using wired Ethernet connectivity to wireless," says Bischoff.

In addition, York can utilize Aruba to cost-effectively unify security requirements by centralizing network access control across its wired and wireless networks. "It's been on our roadmap for some time," Bischoff says. "With alternate solutions, the complexity and costs were too high."

ON THE HORIZON

Next up, York is evaluating deployment of ClearPass Guest and ClearPass Onboard as well as migrating to Aruba's lightning-fast 802.11ac infrastructure.

"For guest access, we're planning to create a system-wide sponsored guest service, rather than having static guest accounts," explains Bischoff. "We're looking forward to the added security and automation ClearPass will provide."

In short, Aruba is an integral partner in York's efforts to continue serving as a regional leader in secondary education. "We are an absolute proponent of our Aruba solution," Bischoff says. "With 131,000 users, 200-plus locations to support, and an extremely lean network team, I fully endorse the Aruba product because it works, and works well."

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.

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