TURKISH PRIVATE SCHOOL EMBRACES NETWORK MANAGED SERVICE TO ENABLE FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Managed connectivity service enables private school to focus on digital transforming teaching and learning
Açı Schools is a private education provider in Istanbul, Turkey. It has quickly grown from one school to seven, spanning pre- to high school with 450 teachers and 1,900 students at the five campuses.

“We have no immediate plans to grow further,” says Biriz Tansu, IT Manager, Açı Schools, “Our goal has always been educational excellence.”

**CREATING A REPUTATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Education is an increasingly digital enterprise. As a private provider, Açı wants to deliver an exceptional digital learning environment. To do so it must create a service point of difference and, to ensure its service levels are met, it wants to deliver a superior digital experience for students and staff.

“Our students can enjoy a paperless learning environment,” says Tansu. “All materials are digital, everything can be done via a mobile device.”

This requires Açı to take firm control of its wired and wireless network. Açı wanted group-wide network consistency, yet reducing the time and effort needed to manage network issues. “Açı is an education specialist, not technology company,” says Tansu. She wants the technology team focused on service innovation, not mundane operations.

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Simplify network management
- Ensure consistency access across all schools and all classrooms
- Strengthen cyber security with managed access for individual users and devices

**SOLUTION**

- Aruba Wi-Fi 6 Indoor & Outdoor Access Points
- Aruba 2930F-series Access Switches
- ClearPass Policy Manager
- Aruba Central Cloud-based Device Manager
- HPE Financial Services – long-term lease
- Managed service by Aruba MSP partner Arti ve Arti

**OUTCOMES**

- Establishes transparent service levels and costs
- Improves application performance
- Underpins digital learning environment
- Reduces strain on in-house network team
- Spreads cost of infrastructure over a long period

**EMBRACING A MANAGED SERVICE**

The Açı Schools network is now delivered as a managed service by Arti ve Arti, a local Aruba MSP partner. Arti ve Arti manages the LAN and WAN infrastructure across eight locations via Aruba Central. The Aruba hardware includes Aruba 500 series access points and Aruba 2930F series switches. Aruba ClearPass identifies every device and authenticates every user, automating the onboarding and NAC processes.

“Security is obviously a major concern,” says Tansu. “The advantage of the Aruba approach is that we’re...
Our management understands the importance of the network. It recognises the need for a robust wireless infrastructure and that this is a sizeable investment. The advantage of working with Aruba and Arti ve Arti is that we have the reporting and the SLAs to demonstrate regular progress.

BIRIZ TANSU
IT Manager, Açi Schools

able to manage access to a granular level. We receive an alert if there is an attempt at unauthorised access.”

The Arti ve Arti proposal was financed through HPE Financial Services. Arti ve Arti owns the Aruba hardware and then leases it to Açi. HPE financing enables the partner to stagger hardware payments over a longer period.

ESTABLISHING CONSISTENT CONNECTIVITY ACROSS SCHOOLS
There is now consistent, seamless wireless connectivity throughout all schools. Students and staff are able to move freely around the school, or between locations, with no drop in connectivity. This extends the learning environment and boosts confidence in the paperless learning experience.

“Our previous wireless solution had been decided largely on price. At the time, it was the most economical way to install wireless,” says Tansu. “Unfortunately, we soon started to experience issues. It couldn’t handle video content and gave a poor roaming experience. If a user moved location they lost network access. The Aruba architecture has removed all of those issues.”

The network upgrade enables Açi Schools to focus on improvements to its digital learning environment. Video content is now commonplace. The pandemic required the use of online platforms, a feature that has been retained across all Açi locations even as children returned to the classroom. Açi wants pupils to be able access the materials they need, wherever they are located. Tansu’s next objective is to strengthen student tracking on campus or detect cheating within coursework and exams.

Removing the management burden
The engagement removes the burden of managing, updating and supporting all network issues. Given the difficulty of moving between locations in Istanbul, this is a hugely significant time saving for Tansu and her team.

“We can still make changes to the network ourselves, should we wish, but the reality is that Arti ve Arti experts are on-demand,” Tansu explains.

Açi Schools pays an agreed monthly fee over a three-year period for specified service deliverables. This provides transparency around future costs and frees Tansu’s team to focus on digital projects benefitting students and teachers.
“We don’t own the hardware – that is all taken care of by Arti ve Arti – but we do have the assurance that our network will be kept up to date with the latest standards,” Tansu explains. “That removes the need for us to constantly check the market. Again, our previous vendor required us to regularly reinvest in new hardware.”

**ENABLING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO EXCEL**

Tansu is clear this is a significant corporate investment but says fee-paying parents expect a certain standard of service. Digital excellence is critical to the success of the business, she adds:

“Our management understands the importance of pervasive connectivity. It recognises the need for a robust wireless infrastructure and that this is a sizeable investment. The advantage of working with Aruba and Arti ve Arti is that we have the reporting and the SLAs to demonstrate regular progress.

“But it is in the classroom that the difference is felt most. Every corner of every one of our schools enjoys robust wireless roaming. The entire class can share large files, use video or access any app they need, all at the same time. There are no excuses.”