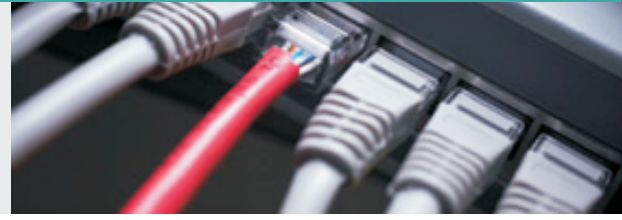


DATA CABLING

De Aston School Case Study



De Aston School chose Data Cabling to design and implement a school-wide data networking solution to improve the speed, flexibility and strength of its network infrastructure.

The School

De Aston School, located in Market Rasen, Lincoln, has approx. 1200 pupils and 120 staff, with numbers growing year-on-year. Pupils are drawn from a wide rural catchment area, so the school benefits from a broad social mix to match its extensive academic curriculum. In every year group, it has potential Oxbridge entrants and pupils with acute Special Needs.

The Challenge

Technology underpins De Aston's approach to inclusive education. This is evident in teaching aids used on a daily basis, such as remote conferencing, interactive whiteboards, wireless laptops and a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), allowing teachers and students to interact in school or from anywhere in the world. Technology drives the school's innovative educational programmes and De Aston is constantly refining its core technologies to accommodate growth and provide a platform on which the school can evolve. In 2007, in consultation with Data Cabling, De Aston decided to upgrade the school's entire communications infrastructure.

The school's original Ethernet network, based on 3Com products, had coped well despite escalating demand. In just two years, the user base had grown dramatically as the school doubled its computers for both students and staff. The network had also dealt with the constant addition, and increasingly heavy use, of ever more complex and bandwidth-hungry network applications. The imminent completion in autumn 2007, of the latest in a series of renovation projects, would put yet more strain on the network. The refurbished building, in this case the IT suites, was to provide a specialist teaching unit for IT classrooms. The suites would house state-of-the-art technology that would need access to a powerful, high-bandwidth network.

When the school decided to move to an IT system that would deliver both its immediate teaching needs as well as those that would come with the introduction of the VLE, there was no question that the existing data network had to be upgraded. When the time came to identify the technologies that would provide De Aston's converged communications infrastructure, Data Cabling were approached to design and implement the most appropriate and cost effective data portion of the networking solution.



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The Solutions

Data Cabling designed and implemented a 3Com® Gigabit Ethernet solution based on the following products:

- ✦ 3Com Switch 5500G SFP gives De Aston School a high-speed, high-density, modular LAN backbone, offering full redundancy and multiple trunked links to various areas nodes. The 3Com Switch 5500G SFP enhances the service available to users through the combination of extensive CoS/QoS functions and traffic management capabilities.
- ✦ 3Com Switch 4500 provides optimal-performance, feature-rich Ethernet LAN switching with high port density. The 3Com Switch 4500 provides Layer 2 switching together with advanced QoS (Quality of Service) and traffic management.

The Benefits

The new 3Com Gigabit Ethernet solution has been successfully implemented in the school's entire network infrastructure. Already the bandwidth provided by the 3Com Gigabit Ethernet solution has made an impact in the classroom. Fast connection is a definite advantage in a teaching situation where any delay can result in the more easily distracted pupils losing interest. Yet more valuable lesson time can then be wasted as the teacher attempts to regain their attention. Since the new network went live, the full 50 minutes of every lesson are used productively, as an entire class of around 30 pupils can now connect simultaneously within seconds.

Having responsibility for a complex network that is constantly evolving to meet the school's needs, is one reason why Simon Davies, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) manager at De Aston, appreciates the powerful, yet easy to use features of 3Com Network Supervisor.

"The 3Com Gigabit Ethernet solution combines fantastic value for money with excellent technology that is backed by continuing research and consistently lives up to the promises made on its behalf. De Aston School now has the fast, flexible yet robust network it needs to support its plans for the future. From the school's point of view, 3Com equipment makes economic sense over the longer term, as the majority of 3Com equipment can be upgraded using reasonably priced software add-ons.

We are putting in more wireless networking, separate from the school's network, and Data Cabling have already incorporated security for this using the 3Com solution. Data Cabling have been very professional, helpful, accommodating and cost-effective in all the solutions they have installed for our school."

Simon Davies, ICT Manager, De Aston School.

For more information on Data Cabling's Solutions please contact:
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