Downlands College Toowoomba

Comprehensive, cost-effective Network Solution from D-Link, providing remarkable wireless performance

"The improvement in performance of D-Link products through the generations has been remarkable, with the current DWL-8610AP providing high levels of stability and speed for our AC WiFi-equipped fleet of 900 laptops. We look forward to working with D-Link on upcoming refurbishment projects and I expect they will be more than competitive."

— Lance McKewen, Director of IT, Downlands College Toowoomba

Contact us for more information on Network Solutions for your School.

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Background

Organisation: Downlands College is an independent Catholic coeducational day and boarding school for students from years 7 to 12, based in Toowoomba, Queensland. Today it accommodates 530 day and 200 boarding students from all parts of Queensland, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and beyond.

Challenge: Downlands College were seeking a wireless solution to cover the entire campus. This was no mean feat as Downlands has a huge campus with many classroom buildings and five boarding houses.

Overview

Downlands' involvement with D-Link began in 2009 when they were seeking a wireless solution to cover the entire campus. A D-Link engineer conducted a site survey prior to designing the wireless solution and tendering for the business. After consulting other schools in our area Downlands found that the D-Link solution was comprehensive and cost-effective, which meant they could complete the whole project with the funding available, rather than a partial solution with competitive products.

The Solution

Since starting in 2009 with two DWS-3024 controllers and a DWL-3500AP, Downlands have incrementally upgraded through three generations of D-Link wireless products, including DWS-4026 controllers, DWL-8600AP, DWL-6600AP and DWL-8610AP. Downlands commented that, "The improvement in performance of these products through the generations has been remarkable, with the current DWL-8610AP providing high levels of stability and speed for our AC WiFi-equipped fleet of 900 laptops."

The Downlands wired network, spanning around 30 separate buildings using fibre links, has been replaced entirely with D-Link Layer 2 and Layer 3 switches. Recently the College's legacy telephone system, with nearly 200 extensions, was replaced with a modern VOIP system and after a few firmware upgrades, the D-Link switches are coping easily with the voice traffic.

The Outcome

The backward and forward compatibility of the Access Points and controllers has reduced Downlands' capital expenditure as they have been able to continue using the DWS-4026s they have had for some years. Downlands was also particularly pleased with what they referred to as, "the excellent pre-sales and after-sales support from D-Link and their local resellers, including site visits from D-Link engineers at state and national levels." Not only have issues been sorted promptly, but the service has increased Downlands' own knowledge of the "good and bad" of networking and Wi-Fi.

Director of IT, Downlands College Lance McKewen said, "If we had our time again, we would purchase a higher proportion of PoE switches to power the many APs and VOIP phones. The new DGS-1510-28P and the tiny DGS-1210-10P can be installed in tight cabinets and operate almost silently."

The next project is to replace Downlands' long-lived and much-loved TMG software UTM firewalls as this product is end of life. Downlands has purchased the small and quiet DFL-860E and also the larger DFL-1660 firewall for heavy Internet traffic. At this early stage the firewalls appear to be easy to configure and provide extensive optional UTM capabilities for a fraction of the price of leading firewall competitors.

Products integrated in this solution include:

	2 x D-Link DWS-4026 24-Port Gigabit PoE Unified Wireless Controllers
	60 x D-Link DWL-6600AP Unified Wireless N600 Dual Band Concurrent Access Points
	3 x D-Link DWL-8610AP Unified Wireless AC Dual Band Concurrent Access Points
	8 x D-Link DGS-1510-28P 28-Port Gigabit SmartPro PoE Switches
	1 x D-Link DFL-1660 NetDefend™ Security UTM Firewall
	2 x D-Link DGS-3620-52T 52-Port Gigabit xStack Layer 3+ Managed Stackable Switches