

OPENING A NEW CAMPUS – WITH NO IT SURPRISES



As part of a government initiative, several colleges across Scotland have been merging to create larger, multi-campus education environments.

Ayrshire College is one example of this initiative in action: a combination of three separate college campuses in Ayrshire, south-west Scotland.

A long-time partner, Ayrshire College has worked with DTP in the past to help unify and consolidate the disparate networking, infrastructure and IT systems across the three campuses as they merged.

As the College opened its new campus in Kilmarnock, Brad Johnstone, IT Manager at Ayrshire College turned to DTP again to provide the networking, server and storage solutions. DTP would help manage the project to ensure all campuses would remain integrated.

“DTP had everything ready in time for our move-in date. All the systems were up and running, and everything just worked from day one.”

Brad Johnstone
Head of ICT

ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

As part of a £53m re-development project, Brad felt a “good enough” approach to redesigning IT at the Kilmarnock campus simply wasn't an option.

“The whole time we were thinking: ‘How do we go about building this new kind of campus, and making sure it delivers the kind of learning experiences students and staff expect?’ With the amount of budget going into the campus, I knew that a generic PC and software setup wasn't going to cut it.”

When the College went to tender, Brad's ultimate aim was to install Citrix on end-point devices at the College – empowering students to access any of the tools they needed through any device via a virtual desktop.

But to achieve a seamless virtual desktop experience, the new campus needed cutting-edge networking, servers and storage in the data centre. DTP won the tender for each of these data centre elements, and delivered a combination of integrated HPE Moonshot infrastructure alongside high-performance HPE 3PAR storage. Another Citrix partner came in to assist with virtual desktop deployment.

With the combination of HPE Moonshot, 3PAR and Citrix, the College was able to allow more power users than with competing systems – ensuring students would be able to use even the most demanding software packages through virtual clients.

Telephone: **0113 276 0210**

Web: www.dtpgroup.co.uk

Email: essnsales@dtpgroup.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter for the latest IT news and insights @DTPGroup IT

**SOLVING
IT TOGETHER**

INTEROPERABILITY: A KEY CONCERN



One of the key reasons DTP won the tender for networking and infrastructure was its clear focus on integrating new solutions with the existing systems at the College's Ayr and Kilwinning campuses.



With Cisco solutions in place across the other two campuses, the selected networking solutions at the new Kilmarnock campus needed to seamlessly integrate with Cisco.

To ensure the new wireless networks could extend the student experience seamlessly across campuses, while offering interoperability between Cisco and HP, Brad and his team deployed HPE Aruba Access Points and Airwave.

Featuring the latest 802.11ac Wave 2 wireless technologies, the new access points deliver a fantastic experience for all students regardless of location, device or connection. And with HPE Aruba Airwave, the College IT staff get simple, streamlined management of all networking elements through a single platform – regardless of vendor or campus.

Finally, HPE Aruba ClearPass was also chosen to manage Network Access Control. Another multivendor management tool, ClearPass, helps Brad and his team take granular control of access policies and shore up security across all campuses.

"We needed something that would work with our existing Cisco estate without issue, while still delivering a state-of-the-art network across all campuses. DTP proved they could do just that, with a presentation that really blew us away. And then they delivered exactly what they said they would."

MANAGING A LARGE-SCALE IT DEPLOYMENT

Coinciding with the complete renovation of the Kilmarnock campus, the new IT solution was a complex, multi-faceted operation involving several IT partners. While Brad's team normally manages IT projects within the College, they were concerned about handling such a large project while continuing to deliver existing support services to the other two Ayrshire campuses.

"Because of the size of the job, we asked DTP to manage the whole project, and co-ordinate the deployment of Citrix and the underlying infrastructure. We still had the other campuses to run, and we needed DTP's help to control the project delivery, manage the different partners and ensure we were sticking to expected timelines."

The sheer complexity of the project demanded a great deal of flexibility in how the solutions were configured and eventually deployed. Thankfully, DTP could accommodate these changes to development timelines, and configured the solutions internally prior to the new campus opening date.

Once DTP had finished designing the systems internally, they were able to simply rack and stack the solutions once the new campus opened.

"DTP had everything ready in time for our move-in date. All the systems were up and running, and everything just worked from day one."

"Because of the sheer size of the job, we asked DTP to manage the whole project as well, and co-ordinate the deployment of Citrix and the underlying infrastructure."

Brad Johnstone
Head of ICT

Telephone: **0113 276 0210**

Web: www.dtpgroup.co.uk

Email: essnsales@dtpgroup.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter for the latest IT news and insights @DTPGroup IT

SOLVING
IT TOGETHER

FASTER, SMOOTHER IT FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS



The new virtual desktop systems and the infrastructure behind them have already delivered significant benefits to staff and students at Ayrshire College.

The Citrix systems have helped provide a more flexible learning experience for Ayrshire students. Now when a student logs in, they have access to all the tools they need, regardless of where they are on campus and what device they are using.

Thanks to the data centre elements provided by DTP, the College can ensure applications perform just as well on virtual desktop environments as on traditional local machines. And by using thin clients with less on-disk software to load, students' log-on times have been cut in half.

"During a focus group with the students, we asked them how they found their experience with Citrix. They didn't even know what it was. That's the best we could ask for in a way. The underlying DTP data centre elements are working so well, students can't even tell they're using virtual clients over wireless. It just works."

Brad quickly saw that staff at the College were experiencing a similar level of reliability from the new system.

"You don't ever really hear from people unless something breaks, right? It has been very telling that we haven't heard any real complaints from our staff at all. Clearly the systems are doing what they need to do."

Though Citrix has only been rolled out to devices on the Kilmarnock campus so far, the College aims to bring virtual desktops to its other campuses soon.

"The underlying DTP data centre elements are working so well, students can't even tell they're using virtual clients over wireless. It just works."

"You don't ever really hear from people unless something breaks, right? It has been very telling that we haven't heard any real complaints from our staff at all."

Brad Johnstone
Head of ICT

Telephone: **0113 276 0210**

Web: www.dtpgroup.co.uk

Email: essnsales@dtpgroup.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter for the latest IT news and insights @DTPGroup IT

SOLVING
IT TOGETHER

“DTP HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTE JOY TO WORK WITH”

Throughout the planning, management and deployment of the new campus IT systems, Ayrshire College has had a consistently positive experience with DTP.

“With new builds like this, there will always be challenges. Surprisingly though, there have been no nasty surprises. DTP’s solutions have all done what they were meant to do with no fuss, all from day one.”

With Brad’s team taking on such a complex project to transform the IT estate in time for the new campus renovation, he was grateful that the DTP team was on hand to offer expert technical advice and support throughout:

“DTP has one of the best technical support teams I’ve ever known. They’re all top-of-the-line engineers that know their stuff. I can discuss the College’s challenges with them, safe in the knowledge that DTP will always put the customer’s needs first, and not try to sell us any money-making gimmicks for their own benefit.”

With so many systems set to change during the campus renovation, Brad was also pleased that DTP worked so closely with his team, and helped train his technicians on the new infrastructure:

“It was really important to me that my team of technicians could be deeply involved in the project. DTP were great about collaborating with them. The college team truly built the solution alongside DTP. This was a huge experience for the technicians. I think getting to work so closely on designing and deploying the network elements was a great experience for them, and a rare opportunity to further hone their skills and expertise.”

Ayrshire College has been a long-standing DTP client, and this recent transformation project marks yet another successful IT implementation between the two organisations.

“DTP has always given me confidence that I’m getting the right tools the College needs. There’s never a problem approaching DTP - the team has always been on-hand to answer my questions. DTP are just an absolute joy to work with. I can’t speak highly enough about them – and about everything they’ve done to help Ayrshire College get to where it is today.”



“DTP has one of the best technical support teams I’ve ever known. They’re all top-of-the-line engineers that know their stuff. I can discuss the College’s challenges with them, safe in the knowledge that DTP will always put the customer’s needs first.”

“The team has always been on-hand to answer my questions. DTP are just an absolute joy to work with. I can’t speak highly enough about them.”

Brad Johnstone
Head of ICT

Telephone: **0113 276 0210**

Web: www.dtpgroup.co.uk

Email: essnsales@dtpgroup.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter for the latest IT news and insights @DTPGroup IT

SOLVING
IT TOGETHER