

Widespread Praise for Wi-Fi at the Association of Independent Schools Conference

Client
Association of Independent Schools (AIS)

Scope of work
Managed Services

Industry
Education



About the Client

The Association of Independent Schools (AIS) is the peak body supporting more than 480 independent schools in NSW. These schools educate over 200,000 children.

Overview

One of the ways AIS supports their member schools is with an annual ICT Leadership and Management Conference. Running since 2005, it is the premier event for ICT managers and ICT professionals in school education in Australia. The conference attracts hundreds of attendees from across the state and always has an impressive line-up of speakers and event sponsors. Atturra Managed Services (then operating as Somerville) have been major sponsors of the conference since 2005.

Fast Facts

- 300–450 conference attendees with around 1,200 concurrently connected devices need secure, seamless Wi-Fi
- Solution was to design and deploy a custom secure Wi-Fi network
- Over 20 wireless access points and three custom Wi-Fi networks
- Successful implementations have continued annually since 2013

Problem

With the increasing reliance on cloud computing to store data and run applications, Internet connectivity has become critical for conference attendees, particularly presenters.

Sadly, event Wi-Fi was a big challenge for conference organisers in the early years, particularly due to the Hunter Valley location.

“Sponsors couldn’t showcase their technologies to their potential, and our speakers and delegates worked with inconsistent connectivity while trying to experience the conference as well as stay connected with their schools.” explained John Clear, Conference Convenor.

Failing to address this issue could negatively affect the conference’s reputation and put its future at risk.



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John Clear, ICT Leadership and Management Conference Convenor

Solution

When the conference moved to Canberra in 2013, AARNet provided high-speed connectivity into the National Convention Centre as part of its sponsorship agreement, and Atturra Managed Services offered to design and deploy a secure Wi-Fi network that would allow seamless and secure connectivity for all.

After the success of this first implementation in 2013, we continued to provide Wi-Fi networks year on year for the AIS Conference.

The typical solution caters for between 300 and 450 event attendees and is capable of handling around 1200 concurrently connected devices. Wi-Fi connectivity is provided via more than 22 wireless access points covering the exhibition floor, main conference room and breakout session rooms. There are also wired connections for each Platinum and Gold sponsor’s exhibition stand and each session room podium.

Importantly, the network is secured, ensuring that any potential threats are either prevented or detected in real-time, and access is blocked to certain sites.

The solution calls for three separate wireless networks—one each for the presenters, delegates and exhibitors. “This way, we can set aside a guaranteed portion of bandwidth for the speakers, so there is never any issue with their presentations, regardless of the amount of traffic on the network,” says Clear.

Outcomes achieved

Fundamentally, a fully functioning Wi-Fi has made all the difference for the organisers of the annual AIS ICT Leadership and Management Conference. It’s given the event attendees confidence to be away for three days, knowing that they can stay connected with their schools.

“Thanks to the quality of the network provided by Atturra Managed Services, we can confidently fill a program with workshops and sessions that require Internet access. We encourage our presenters to access content online for their sessions and guarantee them that it’s going to work.”

“The Atturra Managed Services network also allows our exhibitors the freedom to showcase all the technologies and solutions they want to promote at the event.” Clear continues.

Not only that, but the event organisers can easily share their conference in real-time with a wider international education audience on social media.

“Atturra Managed Services has been absolutely brilliant to work with,” said the AIS’ John Clear. “There were people on-site during the whole event, which meant that any issues could be addressed on the spot.”