

CASE STUDY

Charles Sturt University (CSU)

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Interview with Phillip Roy, Director Operations, Division of Information Technology at CSU



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More than 11,000 students and staff at Charles Sturt University (CSU) will soon have increased wireless access to the Internet and other online resources from any of the university’s nine campuses in regional NSW thanks to the deployment of a new Motorola wireless network.

The \$2 million network, funded in part by the Federal Government’s Better University Renewal Fund, is currently being installed by Motorola partner Cirrus Communications, and is expected to significantly improve the availability of learning resources and access to high-value learning tools such as video streaming, multimedia presentations and podcasts.

Phillip Roy, Director Operations, Division of Information Technology, at CSU, says that without a new network, the University would not be able to take full advantage of next generation mobile digital learning applications that form the foundation of learning resources, both on and off campus.

“Our experience of wireless networking in the past could be summed up as ad-hoc, meaning access was limited to certain hotspots, and varied depending on the campus – even the location within individual campuses,” he says. “This new network will give us blanket wireless coverage, not only across all the campuses, but both indoors and outdoors, and extend to adjoining student residences as well. It will also significantly increase the speed and reliability of wireless access on campus.”

Roy says CSU wanted to cater for the large number of different devices that students use to consume and share online content, including smartphones, mobiles, laptops, tablets, and more.

“Not only did we want the network to be fast and easily accessible, it also had to be versatile enough to deliver high-speed services irrespective of the access device,” he says. “I’m happy to say that Motorola and Cirrus pleasantly surprised us with the maturity of the final design.”

Cirrus Communications’ chief executive officer Dr Eric Heyde says CSU’s geography presented specific challenges for the design team.

Why Motorola Wireless Network?

This network is an ideal showcase for the depth of Motorola’s product portfolio and the maturity of the Australian-based expertise.





“Because the university is so spread out, we had to plan for different access densities to ensure consistent performance in all areas,” says Heyde. “While density is typically not an issue in light traffic areas, the high number of concurrent devices that would connect to the network in, say, a crowded lecture hall, needed to be accounted for and managed.

“High density can often result in bottlenecks for wireless networks,” he adds. “You only have to look back a few weeks at how [Apple CEO] Steve Jobs struggled during his iPhone 4 launch presentation because too many devices were congesting the wireless network. Motorola’s technology ensures that won’t happen in CSU’s lecture halls.”

Roy Wittert, manager, Motorola Wireless Network Solutions, Motorola Enterprise Mobility Solutions, Australia and New Zealand, says the CSU network

is a good example of Motorola’s holistic approach to wireless networking, including both indoor and outdoor solutions, combined with centralised management and security.

“Australian universities are constantly challenging each other to provide the most open and attractive learning environment for prospective students, and this drive really pushes the limits of technology,” he says. “This network is an ideal showcase for the depth of our product portfolio and the maturity of our Australian-based expertise, which has given CSU a competitive advantage in the provision of open, accessible wireless access.”

Motorola’s solution for CSU includes Motorola AP-7131 dual radio wireless access points, Motorola Mesh Network AP 7181, Motorola RFS7000 wireless LAN switches, and Motorola AirDefense Services Platform.