Healthscope
Mobility
& BYOD:

CSA provides Healthscope a national hospitals wireless network on time, on budget and immediately unlocks value for patients and medical staff alike. 40 hospitals, every state and territory, limited bandwidth, central control… no problem.

Client Overview

Healthscope Limited was formed in 1985 and is one of Australia's leading private healthcare providers. The company is headquartered in Melbourne, and provides 4,500 hospital beds in more than forty locations nationally. The company also operates more than 60 medical centres that provide general practice services for more than 2 million clients annually. To complement these offerings the organisation provides pathology services. The company employs more than 21,500 Australians and operates internationally in Singapore, Malaysia and New Zealand.

Client Challenge

Healthscope's management recognised that providing wireless mobile services for employees would improve efficiency and productivity. The challenge for Healthscope's IT Department was to offer secure access to visiting consultants and extend the service to patients. Healthscope identified a range of critical factors that must be addressed to secure their information systems and provide effective management, while supporting a diverse range of users and wireless devices. Healthscope needed a cost effective method of centrally administering their wireless environment. The new system must be capable of scaling to cover all locations and meet projected growth without adversely affecting the performance of the WAN environment. The solution had to be resilient so that in the event of any system failure, service delivery would not be compromised. The ability to integrate with Healthscope's established user authentication systems was a mandatory design requirement. To future-proof the system, the solution must support Real-Time Location Services (RTLS) that could track the location of people and assets throughout each healthcare facility.

"It was critically important that the solution was robust and able to maintain operations in the case of a component failure, or even in the case of a hospital becoming isolated from the corporate WAN," said Shaun Mawson, Shared Infrastructure Services Manager, Healthscope.

"We expect that patients and medical officers will come to depend on the wireless services, so continuity of access was very important as was the level of security able to be applied to the network access. However, at the same time, we really wanted an economical solution that maintained central control and management over the entire system without dependency on additional onsite equipment. On top of it all, we had some tight deadlines established by the business that had to be met."

"We really wanted everything that was possible or promised by enterprise wireless solutions, but in a tight and well defined timeframe. It was certainly a confronting challenge and the scale, project deadlines and sensitive nature of the environment meant we couldn't afford any failure."

SOLUTION DELIVERED

At the completion of a rigorous enterprise-class wireless evaluation process, Healthscope chose Extreme Networks (formerly Enterasys) partner of the year CSA, to deploy a production pilot of the Wireless and Mobile Identity and Access Management solution across their Corporate HQ and at Knox Private Hospital. The solution comprised Extreme Networks AP3610 wireless access points (AP's) at both locations with an Extreme Networks C5110 WLAN controller to administer and optimise traffic. To improve security, a Network Admission Control (NAC) virtual appliance was deployed to ensure access policies were enforced and only properly credentialed users could gain admission to IT resources. Overseeing the system operation was an Extreme Networks NetSight Network Management Virtual Server (NMS) with Wireless Advanced Services (WAS) to provide powerful and easy to use administration of the wireless environment. With no equipment other than access points installed at Wi-Fi locations, the impact of deployment was minimised. The pilot environment was deployed by CSA and acceptance testing schedules were successfully completed on time. The success of the initial pilot program instilled the Healthscope IT management team with the confidence in the functionality and effectiveness of the solution. It also proved that CSA were capable of meeting the extremely demanding deadlines required for successful broad scale solution rollout.

"Because of the centralised architecture of the solution, we were able to scale up the production pilot and begin a program of rapid site deployments that will see us reach our interim milestone objectives by December 2012" said Mawson. "The scalability of the centralised Extreme Networks solution has allowed us to get these wireless deployments into full production very quickly."

CSA's Project Management ensured managing cabling contractors, conducting wireless surveys and coordinating with local Healthcare staff was consistent and efficient across Australia. Effective project controls and low impact on the WAN has provided a rapid deployment of the National Hospitals Wireless Network.
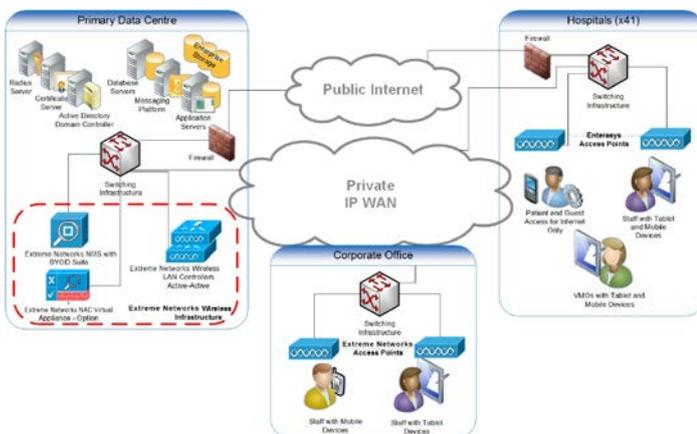
The solution would not be effective without a tight security model. The maturity of the Extreme Networks solution ensured that the NAC solution worked effectively and integrated seamlessly with existing security controls in Active Directory. By enforcing user policy at the network edge, services delivered to users who "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) could be provided securely.

"NAC allows our staff and medical officers to use their existing credentials to gain secured access to the hospital information systems. This provides better utilisation of the same infrastructure that provides different levels of internet access to patients, their guests and consulting medical professionals," continued Mawson. "The Extreme Networks wireless infrastructure and management environment is reliable, secure and even extends into our wired switching environment to provide a single pane of glass to manage our entire network."

VALUE CREATED

The Extreme Networks wireless solution has enabled Healthscope to enhance the patient's hospital experience by directly supporting their personal mobile devices and provided medical personnel with enhanced mobile information services. The new wireless platform has delivered immediate productivity improvements and can readily adapt to future business requirements.

"Today, we are delivering differentiated mobile services tailored to address the individual needs of patients, our healthcare staff and visiting medical consultants. We now anticipate building upon this platform to enhance the efficiency of delivering services within our health care facilities. Our development team are already building mobile applications that will improve information availability for our medical professionals," said Paul Williams, CIO Healthscope. "This is exactly where we need to be in delivering leading healthcare services in Australia and is a great advance on where we were just 6 months ago."

Extreme networks

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