

CASESTUDY

LEGAL

Realising the benefits

When CMS Cameron McKenna needed a wireless network that would provide guest access in its London office, the firm turned to Redstone Converged Solutions for help. The wireless solution that was deployed has been so successful that the firm is already planning to roll it out to its other offices.

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INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM CUTS THE WIRES TO PROVIDE A BETTER GUEST ACCESS SERVICE

The client

CMS Cameron McKenna work hard to be a truly client-focused law firm. This means understanding the unique needs and challenges of each market sector, and providing a service that is tailored to the particular concerns and requirements of each client. CMS Cameron McKenna is a founding member of CMS - the alliance of independent European law firms with more than 55 offices and associated offices worldwide. It employs more than 1,500 people, of which approximately 1,000 are based in the United Kingdom. It is primary counsel to 24 of the FTSE 350 and acted for 109 of the FTSE 350 in 2005–6. The firm’s IT services are managed centrally from its head office in London.

The challenge

“The main driver for this project was our client-facing network. There was a requirement to provide guest access throughout the 35 meeting rooms on the 7th floor of our London offices,” explains Tom Staunton, CMS Cameron McKenna’s Infrastructure Manager. “Historically we would provide an ad hoc connection by physically hooking up a laptop, but as the requirement for guest access grew we recognised that a better solution was needed.”

CMS Cameron McKenna discussed its needs with its incumbent IT supplier, Redstone Converged Solutions, and the two companies worked closely to define the requirements and design a wireless network that met both current and future needs. “We have a good working relationship with Redstone Converged Solutions and they take a very proactive approach within this relationship. Obviously when you have a trusted supplier there is less of a learning curve, which reduces overall cost and makes it more likely that you will get the solution you need,” comments CMS Cameron McKenna’s Neil Pepper, Senior Technical Specialist. “It was important that the chosen solution would fit within our existing infrastructure and be secure, scalable



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Infrastructure Manager,
CMS Cameron McKenna

The results

CMS Cameron McKenna cites the key benefits provided by the solution as:

- Improved level of service to guests.
- Cost-effectiveness – with low cost to scale to other sites.
- Ease of use – with administration by receptionists.
- High levels of security.

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and easy to manage,” continues Tom Staunton. “After gaining a close understanding of what was required Redstone Converged Solutions was able to recommend a solution from Trapeze Networks.”

The chosen solution is based on two core MX-400 Mobility Exchanges within the main comms room, 19 Mobility Points and one MX-R2 Mobility Exchange in the DMZ (DeMilitarized Zone). The solution is managed and administered centrally by Trapeze Networks’ powerful RingMaster Tool Suite Software. “Security was a critical consideration for us as a law firm, due to the fact that we have so much highly confidential data,” says Neil Pepper. “This is one of the key benefits we gained from the Trapeze solution, as the tools it provides in this respect are invaluable.”

The outcome

Clients and visitors to CMS Cameron McKenna can now access the Internet and work folders from meeting rooms. Access to the wireless network is granted from reception through the use of a Java-based guest access application. “The solution looks highly professional, yet it is also simple to administer and secure,” comments Tom Staunton.

Ease of use is demonstrated by how the system is administered. When guests report to reception a guest pass is issued by the receptionist. The receptionist creates an account and a guest pass, also setting an expiry time for the pass. The pass can then be printed out and handed to the guest. It contains all the details they need to log on to the network, and from the user’s point of view logging on to the network is exactly like logging on to their PC. The guest account is automatically deleted from the system when it expires. There is no need for intervention by the IT department, which lowers the admin overhead while improving the level of service to the guest.

“The solution has been highly successful and we are now rolling it out to our other offices,” explains Neil Pepper. “We planned for scalability, and it is proving highly cost-effective and quick to roll out. We are able to deploy it wherever the business identifies a need for it.”

For improved security it is preferable to contain a wireless network within a building, as it is unwise to advertise its presence by allowing the network footprint to leak outside the walls. A detailed survey was conducted with the help of Trapeze Networks RingMaster Planning software, which enables building CAD diagrams to be integrated into it to produce detailed RF coverage maps. The software determines how many Mobility Points will be needed and where they will be sited in a given building. This information is then used to automatically configure the central Mobility Exchange Switches. This ensures that the signal strength is sufficient for optimal coverage, but limited both geographically and in terms of capacity for increased security.

