Cambium Networks™

Marist College Ashgrove Combines High-Density Wi-Fi and BYOD-Enriched Learning

"We've met our goal with Xirrus [Wi-Fi]: to allow students and teachers to access learning materials anywhere using a Wi-Fi-enabled device."

JOHN LEE,
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPERVISOR,
MARIST COLLEGE ASHGROVE

Overview

MARIST COLLEGE ASHGROVE, located just outside of Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, was founded in 1940 as a Roman Catholic day and boarding college for boys. Today, 1,700 boys from grades 5 through 12, including 200 boarders, attend the school.

Marist wanted to enrich learning by giving students access to online resources such as e-books, educational videos and educational games. "The wired network didn't have enough outlets for every student in the classroom, so we decided to build a high-density wireless network," says John Lee, information technology supervisor for Marist College Ashgrove. The network would need to connect everyone in a classroom at the same time—and provide a great experience. Simple management was also important because Marist has a small IT team relative to the number of devices they support.

Students Connect From Anywhere

THE SCHOOL MET ALL OF ITS GOALS with a Xirrus Wi-Fi network. Students, teachers and administrators can connect from any classroom, the library, cafeteria and a 500-seat auditorium. Soon, they'll also have access from the central quad, football field and swimming pool area. "Each Xirrus wireless access point can support a high concentration of users, so we provide coverage throughout a nine-classroom building with just three Xirrus access points."

Initially, Marist only allowed school-owned laptops on the network. But providing one laptop for every student became a costly exercise, so in 2012, the school decided to allow a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) initiative for students in grades 8 through 10. Students can use a Mac, Windows laptop or certain tablets, as long as it meets minimum requirements specified by the school.
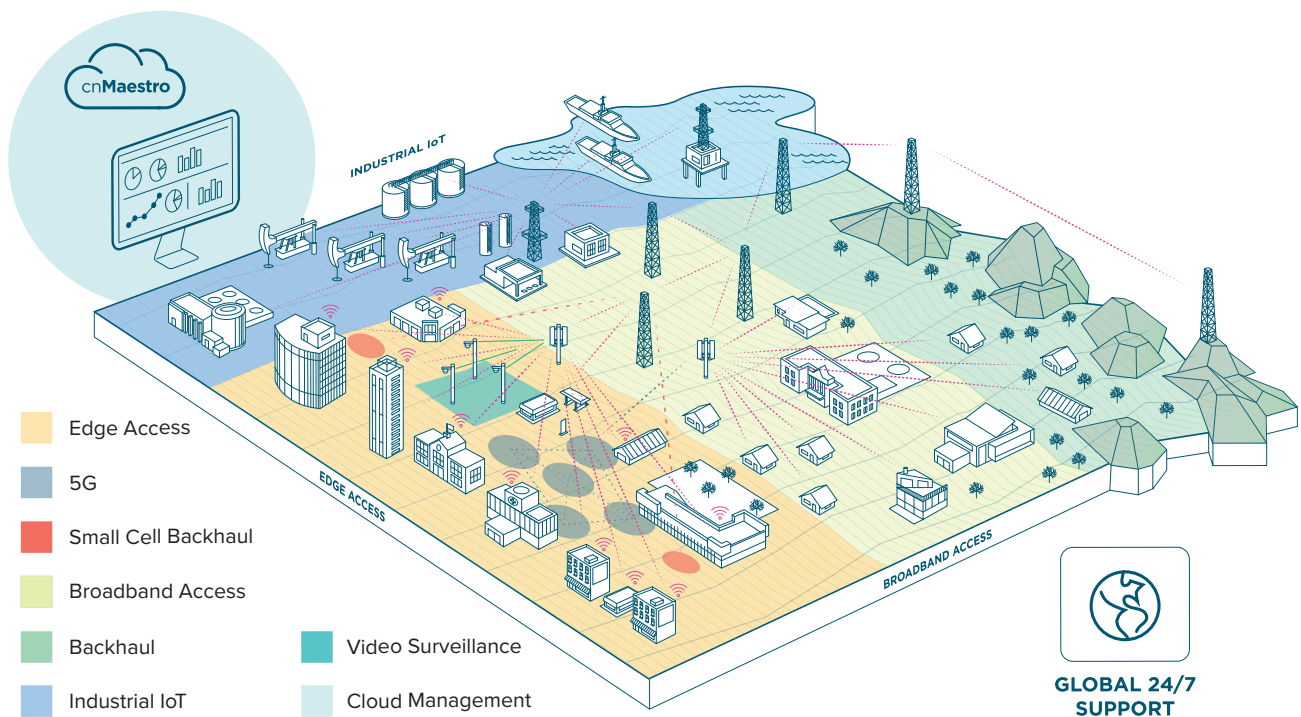
Engaging Learners

WI-FI HAS BECOME A SIGNATURE PART OF LIFE at Marist. In the morning, a boarding student might connect from the residence hall to finish homework, check email and browse the web. When the school day begins, he brings his laptop to class to do research online, read online text books, work on assignments, communicate with teachers and collaborate with classmates. "All students in a classroom or library can connect at the same time with an excellent experience," John says.

In order to deliver the same tools to all students, the IT team set up a web dashboard. After logging in over the Xirrus Wi-Fi network, students see icons for Google Chrome, Microsoft Office365 and a SharePoint portal for viewing assignments and submitting homework. Students and teachers who prefer to log into a virtual desktop see the same icons.

Teachers Like It

MARIST TEACHERS ENLIVEN THE CLASSROOM by using wireless projectors to show educational videos and share students' work. To assess students, they use JacPLUS, a cloud service. Students also have JacPLUS accounts, which they use to access eBooks, educational games, practice exams and more. "Some JacPLUS features aren't available on slower networks," John says. "We're one of schools that can take advantage of practically everything on JacPLUS, and the reason is our high-performance Xirrus Wi-Fi network and fast internet connection."

Teachers who move to different classrooms during the day appreciate not having to log in to the PC in each classroom. Now, they just log on to the Xirrus Wi-Fi network from a laptop at the beginning of the day and carry the laptop with them. There's no need to log in again when they go to their next class.

Edge Access

5G

Small Cell Backhaul

Broadband Access

Backhaul   **Video Surveillance**

Industrial IoT   **Cloud Management**

GLOBAL 24/7 SUPPORT

Cambium Networks' Gigabit wireless solutions enable municipal, enterprise and service provider operators to tailor connectivity to meet exact requirements and grow as needs evolve.

Great Performance, Simple Management

"THE 1,700 STUDENTS WHO USE LAPTOPS generate considerable network traffic, and the Xirrus Wi-Fi handles it all easily," says John. Students and teachers who use newer laptops enjoy even faster performance because Xirrus wireless APs support the 802.11ac standard.

The IT team, for its part, appreciates how easy it is to manage the network. "We open XMS [Xirrus Management System] to ensure all of the indicator lights are green, which tells us that the access points are powered on and operating," John says. "We can quickly tell if someone pulled out a cord, for instance, and correct the issue before it becomes a problem."

John concludes, "We've met our goal with Xirrus [Wi-Fi]: to allow students and teachers to access learning materials anywhere, using a Wi-Fi enabled device. The network works very well."