XIRRUS®

Xirrus Wireless Access Connects Thousands of Customers and Saves Microsoft Thousands of Dollars

Microsoft

The Events Group within Microsoft is responsible for all large events and produces conferences worldwide for tens of thousands of developers, IT professionals, and partners. Attendees are connected live to the network and Internet, making connectivity a crucial component of these high-profile events.

The Microsoft Events organization is responsible for the majority of Microsoft events around the world. Each of these events is composed of keynote addresses, instructional classrooms, and hands-on labs for attendees to learn, develop, and mingle. Having a network capable of supporting the growing number of wireless devices and applications is critical to supporting Microsoft's client base.

Infrastructure requirements included:

- Ability to simultaneously connect thousands of concurrent wireless users
- Centrally managed network
- Quick installation with minimum number of devices and cable pulls

Xirrus Delivers Ultra-Density Wireless

Microsoft had been trying to solve the density challenge of connecting thousands of simultaneous wireless clients in a single room for years, but had been unable to do so. Microsoft partnered with Xirrus in the fall of 2008 for the PDC event at the Los Angeles Convention Center to deliver an ultra-high density wireless network. Each and every deployment since then has been highly successful, delivering connectivity to over 7,000 simultaneous attendees utilizing a wide variety of wireless-enabled computer devices for voice, video, and data applications.

The Xirrus solution provided:

- High performance XN8 and XN16 Wi-Fi Rapid Deployment Kit that can be set up in 10 minutes and support over 400 users on one Array alone
- A level of reliability and security as good or better than wired
- Arrays that integrate 4 to 16 radios, high-grain directional antennas, a multi-giga-bit switch, controller, firewall, and threat sensor into a single access device
- 4X the coverage and up to 8X the bandwidth and capacity to service high user density at locations like conference centers

Benefits:

- Xirrus used 80% fewer devices, requiring 80% fewer man-hours to deploy, saving substantially on infrastructures costs and cabling
- Capability to centrally manage the network from one management screen
- Unmatched wireless coverage
- Excellent support from Xirrus account team

"When we deploy wireless, our big problems and challenges are that we are trying to cover large amounts of space with high density - we've got the ultimate wireless challenges in that we've got huge capacity in certain areas, but we also need to cover the entire facility - that's pretty much been the holy grail," said John O'Gara, group manager for Microsoft's CMG events and studies. "It's not terribly difficult to cover a large space, but it's been really challenging to cover a large space with high density... and when I say high density, I'm talking theater-style seating with seven to 12 thousand people...and at least half of them should be able to open up their laptops or turn on some other mobile device and have a good wireless experience."

One of the primary advantages to the Xirrus architecture over the competitors' offering is that Xirrus is able to decrease the number of access points that are deployed by an average of 75%. This saves Microsoft tens of thousands of dollars in labor costs alone since they are required to pay for the wiring and the drops to accommodate their wireless deployments. With the Xirrus Rapid Deployment Kit (RDK), Microsoft can set up a complete wireless solution in a fraction of the time of other vendors. Each RDK comes with everything needed to deploy a fully functional, high performance wireless network in minutes.

The Xirrus Advantage

With the explosion of smartphones and tablets, mobility has become ubiquitous. People expect to connect wirelessly. Organizations depend on high-bandwidth to send and receive voice, video and data, from any device to any one. And no one delivers better than Xirrus. Our array-based solutions are unique. They draw from cellular tower design principles to provide wired-like reliability, increased user density and capacity plus superior security. They perform under the most demanding conditions and have lower infrastructure requirements. When integrated with business and IT objectives, they help you do more than ever before.

At Xirrus, we apply the "best practices" of wired networking to wireless infrastructures by distributing the intelligence to the edge and outfitting the Array with dense multi-state radios in the same manner as a wired switch. That's how Xirrus delivers the best performing, most scalable wireless solutions in the industry. It's a strategic IT infrastructure advantage that fuels organizations. Because Xirrus does wireless networks right.

"Where we've really won here is we've increased our capacity and solved a problem that we've never been able to solve and we've been able to take care of all the other wireless needs at the event at somewhere under half of the cost for the facility side of things as we have in the past."

JOHN O'GARA,
group manager for Microsoft's
CMG Events & Studies

XIRRUS®
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