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Kevin Puddister, Museum Curator and General Manager

Company:

Dundas Museum & Archives

Industry:

Art, Entertainment, Recreation

Website:

dundasmuseum.ca

Location:

Ontario, Canada

Equipment:

Insight Managed Wireless Access Points (WAC510)

Easy Mount 16-port PoE+ Smart Switch (GS418TPP)

Dundas Museum & Archives brings local history to life using NETGEAR Insight Pro’s wireless technology.

BACKGROUND

Ontario’s Dundas Museum & Archives makes the most of high-tech innovations to tell stories about the past. This combination of the old and the new help the museum engage with visitors of all ages to create a seamless and compelling experience. An integral part of how the museum achieves this is NETGEAR Insight Pro supplied by a local specialist, Birmingham Consulting.

Insight Pro gives the museum and its visitors consistent, high-speed, and reliable wireless communications throughout the site whether streaming video, slideshows, or accessing information on iPads and other devices while moving from room to room. Insight Pro has also helped achieve more efficient and cost-effective management of the museum’s facilities as well as providing a flexible, scalable platform for the future. The icing on the cake is that Insight Pro also supports the museum’s robust security strategy.

THE CHALLENGE

The Dundas Museum & Archives uses collections, exhibits, and events to showcase how Canadian history and geography has unfolded in the Dundas Valley. This award-winning community museum aims to be a place for people of all ages to gather, learn and keep local stories alive. Its modest size doesn’t prevent them from having high professional standards to enhance the visitor experience.

Wireless technology has to play a supporting but an invisible role at the museum. It needs to be reliable and work without being obtrusive. Kevin Puddister, the museum’s Curator and General Manager, agrees. “We use technology to tell the Dundas story without the technology being overwhelming,” said Puddister.

“Not only that the wireless technology has to be seamless,” Keith Green the Vice President added, “It’s about looking ahead and understanding the future without getting carried away, spending money on what will make a difference.”





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Kevin Puddister, Museum Curator and General Manager

The museum had been using WiFi for years, but over time the demand on the network has increased considerably with more users, devices, and bandwidth-hungry applications. For instance, the museum invested in iPads for class tours which allows one iPad for the instructor to move room to room constantly interacting with streaming content. This puts a strain on the WiFi, which should cover every part of the site.

Dundas Museum & Archives also has wireless projectors that they want to provide better support for as well as other common challenges that many museums face like concrete infrastructure that can interfere with the signal. To find a solution for their needs, the museum contacted Ontario-based Birmingham Consulting.

SOLUTION

Managed service provider (MSP) Birmingham Consulting has worked with Dundas Museum & Archives since 2013. They aim to give local businesses a one-stop shop for all their IT, networking and increasingly security requirements. The company blends the considerable expertise of founder Scott Birmingham and his team with best-of-breed technology products together in tailored solutions for each customer.

When Birmingham and his team initially scoped out a proposal for the museum’s wireless requirements, Insight Pro had not yet been launched. However, once the museum received funding for the project, Birmingham thought Insight Pro would give the museum better coverage within the same budget. “The cost of Insight Pro was much better than would be possible with traditional legacy products. We could give the museum so much more,” Birmingham stated.

With Insight Pro, MSPs like Birmingham can provide small business customers with managed networks that are easy to configure, deploy, manage, monitor and change. NETGEAR provides free network site surveys so once Birmingham had given us the museum’s layout, we were able to suggest tweaks to further improve coverage throughout the building.

In addition to six wireless access points, Birmingham also provided an Insight Power over Ethernet (PoE) switch, which acts as a hub for the whole system.

“As an MSP, it’s great to use. We can preconfigure everything before we arrive at the customer site through the cloud portal without having to open any boxes. Insight Pro reduces labor and takes up less of the customer’s time,” Birmingham explained.

RESULT

The switch and access points were installed and running in less than one day. It improved signal strength in all corners of the property. “It was a breeze,” said Puddister.

As well as supporting the visitor experience, Insight Pro enables the museum to use wireless technology for more efficient facilities management. Insight Pro paves the way for the museum to introduce technological possibilities of other innovations such as WiFi adjustable lightbulbs.

“Insight Pro means we have been able to easily configure WiFi to be switched off outside opening hours. So people wandering around outside the perimeter cannot hack into the network. This is important to us because we place a high priority on security,” Green explained. “It’s hard to predict what future technologies will bring because it is always changing, but with Insight Pro we’re confident we have wireless technology that meets the museum’s needs for years to come.”

Scott Birmingham is also pleased how the project has unfolded.

“As we replace other customer’s wireless access points, we’re recommending NETGEAR without question. It’s better for us and it’s better for customers. NETGEAR understands the SMB market. It’s a well-known name with a reputation for reliability. Also, as part of the NETGEAR partner program, I get a dedicated rep who answers my calls and not all vendors do that”.