



CREATING THE CONNECTED CITY

Providing Outdoor Wireless Access for a Northeastern City



Customer Challenge

A northeastern city had developed an initiative to provide free, public WiFi in a downtown, outdoor area. The city had invested a great deal of money into revitalizing the area, and improving the wireless infrastructure was part of the mayor's vision for creating a 21st century, connected city that would attract tech-savvy young professionals and leading conferences to the area. Municipal wireless would also add value for residents of the city, particularly lower-income residents who lacked access to internet in their homes.

The investment in wireless would be funded by one of the city's corporate sponsors, a large bank with deep roots in the area. The bank's IT department had done a great deal of consultative work for the city over the years, as the city's internal IT staff was lean and lacked the technical networking expertise required to handle complex initiatives like the upcoming wireless project. While the bank's IT staff could continue to play a consultative role for the initiative, it did not have the time or resources necessary to take on a project of this magnitude on the city's behalf. The city also lacked the means to manage the wireless solution post-implementation, so it needed a partner with the proper qualifications to provide comprehensive managed services for the municipal network.



The Customer's Desired Outcome

To work with a trusted partner that can oversee the implementation and management of convenient, reliable, and easy to access WiFi for visitors of the city's downtown area.



The ConvergeOne Response

The bank had a long-term working relationship with ConvergeOne. Knowing that ConvergeOne possessed the experience and expertise required to handle the project's complicated design, implementation, and management, the bank introduced ConvergeOne into the discussion with the city's IT department. ConvergeOne immediately went to work laying out the project's complicated networking requirements. The implementation of wireless would prove challenging because the access points had to be in an open area along five miles of waterfront. Further complicating matters, the area was notorious for its volatile weather. Because the wireless would be available for widespread use in a very public area, it would need to support any user who wanted to join on the device of their choice.

ConvergeOne overcame these technical hurdles, devising a plan that would enclose and weather-tighten all the necessary equipment. ConvergeOne then walked the city through the management process, instilling confidence in the leadership team that it was the right partner to manage the software upgrades, breaks/fixes, dispatch, monitoring, and reporting. The city signed a three-year wireless managed services agreement that would give ConvergeOne complete responsibility for supporting the solution, ensuring that the wireless capabilities would continue to function properly regardless of any location or weather-related issues that would arise.

Ultimately, ConvergeOne took complete ownership of the design, installation, configuration, and management of 50 Cisco Meraki Access Points and 10 Cisco Meraki PoE Switches. ConvergeOne determined the locations, power requirements, and design of the antennas and completed the implementation within the course of several months. ConvergeOne also worked with a local company to complete the complicated mesh wireless design.

Results

The wireless initiative has been a remarkable success, and it has been featured in local news stories as a draw for the city. The city's use of innovative technology aligns perfectly with its ongoing directives to improve its infrastructure and surrounding areas.

While the city initially signed a three-year managed services agreement, it has since renewed the contract for an additional three years because of the strength of ConvergeOne's services. ConvergeOne is in constant communication with the city, providing weekly reports about who's accessed the WiFi, how long they were on it, and peak usage times. Nearly 10,000 unique users access the wireless each month, with more than 1,000 clients accessing it daily. The implementation has been so successful that the city's new administration has engaged ConvergeOne about expanding wireless access to other areas, including parks and lower-income residential locations.

The project's success has also strengthened ConvergeOne's relationship with the bank that sponsored the city's wireless initiative. ConvergeOne recently finalized an agreement to implement and support the bank's Cisco Meraki WiFi project, which is directly attributable to the fact that ConvergeOne proved itself capable of managing a complex environment with the city's wireless initiative.



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