

Case Study: Somerville House Finds Cost-Effective Enterprise Solutions from D-Link to Be a Great Fit

Somerville House is an independent day and boarding school for girls. Established in 1899, the school is located in the inner city of South Brisbane, Queensland and has a student body of over 1200 girls. Catering for students from years K-12, Somerville House is a leading example of integrating and utilizing the latest technology into the student learning process.

The Challenge

D-Link is Somerville's long-term supplier of end-to-end networking solutions. In 2006, the school selected D-Link for a wireless networking solution providing 1000 students and 120 staff laptops seamless wireless access to the school's campus-wide network. The existing solution, which was based around older-style standalone access points, had become too expensive and too time consuming to maintain.

Somerville's goal was to find a robust, scalable, enterprise-level solution providing high availability for all their users that met the projected budget. A project team researched many of the major vendors' products and found that D-Link's DWS-3024 Gigabit Wireless Switch met all of its criteria.

More recently, when faced with the prospect of upgrading its entire network infrastructure, Somerville House again turned to D-Link to replace its aging Fast Ethernet network with Gigabit Ethernet and Power over Ethernet (PoE) capabilities. At the same time, the school wanted to take the opportunity to upgrade its network backbone to 10 Gigabit Ethernet to alleviate network bottlenecks.



"With the increased networking demands of 802.11n wireless networking and Voice over IP, Gigabit Ethernet and Power over Ethernet to every data connection point begins making a lot of sense," said Mona Taimana, Director of IT for Somerville House.

"With that comes the need to ensure that your backbone is up to speed and so 10 Gigabit to your main aggregation points becomes increasingly important."

Finally, Somerville House had also outgrown its existing data storage solution and was looking to improve its disaster recovery capabilities.

"Data storage requirements for the school were on the increase and our existing solution was quickly drawing to the end of its lease cycle," said Michael del Manso, Network Manager for Somerville House. "After seven years of using technology as a vehicle for the development and delivery of curriculum to students, our staff were literally beginning to run out of disk space. At the same time, ensuring that all of our digital resources were adequately covered in the event of a disaster was beginning to prove cumbersome."

“We were able to replace every switch in the organization in a cost effective way and, in doing so, have an end-to-end managed network with capacity and features to see us well into the foreseeable future,” said Taimana.

The Solution

D-Link won the contract to upgrade Somerville House’s existing Fast Ethernet network with enterprise-level, xStack Gigabit Ethernet Switches with PoE. D-Link’s xStack Gigabit Ethernet Switch with integrated 10 Gigabit support was also used to replace the school’s core switch to add 10 Gigabit per second networking capabilities.

“We were able to replace every switch in the organization in a cost effective way and, in doing so, have an end-to-end managed network with capacity and features to see us well into the foreseeable future,” said Taimana. “What is just as important is the great support that we get from D-Link both locally and from the head office in Sydney.”

D-Link also supplied an enterprise storage solution based on its xStack Storage™ Area Network (SAN) Array DSN-3200-10 to accommodate the school’s expanding data storage demand. Somerville House introduced three DSN-3200-10 SAN Arrays – with 15 available drive bays each – into its operations and fully populated each unit with 1.5 Terabyte disk drives.

The Benefit

The initial implementation of D-Link’s wireless networking solution represented major cost savings to the school through reduced maintenance costs.

“D-Link’s DWS-3024 switch gives our technical personnel a secure, centralized management

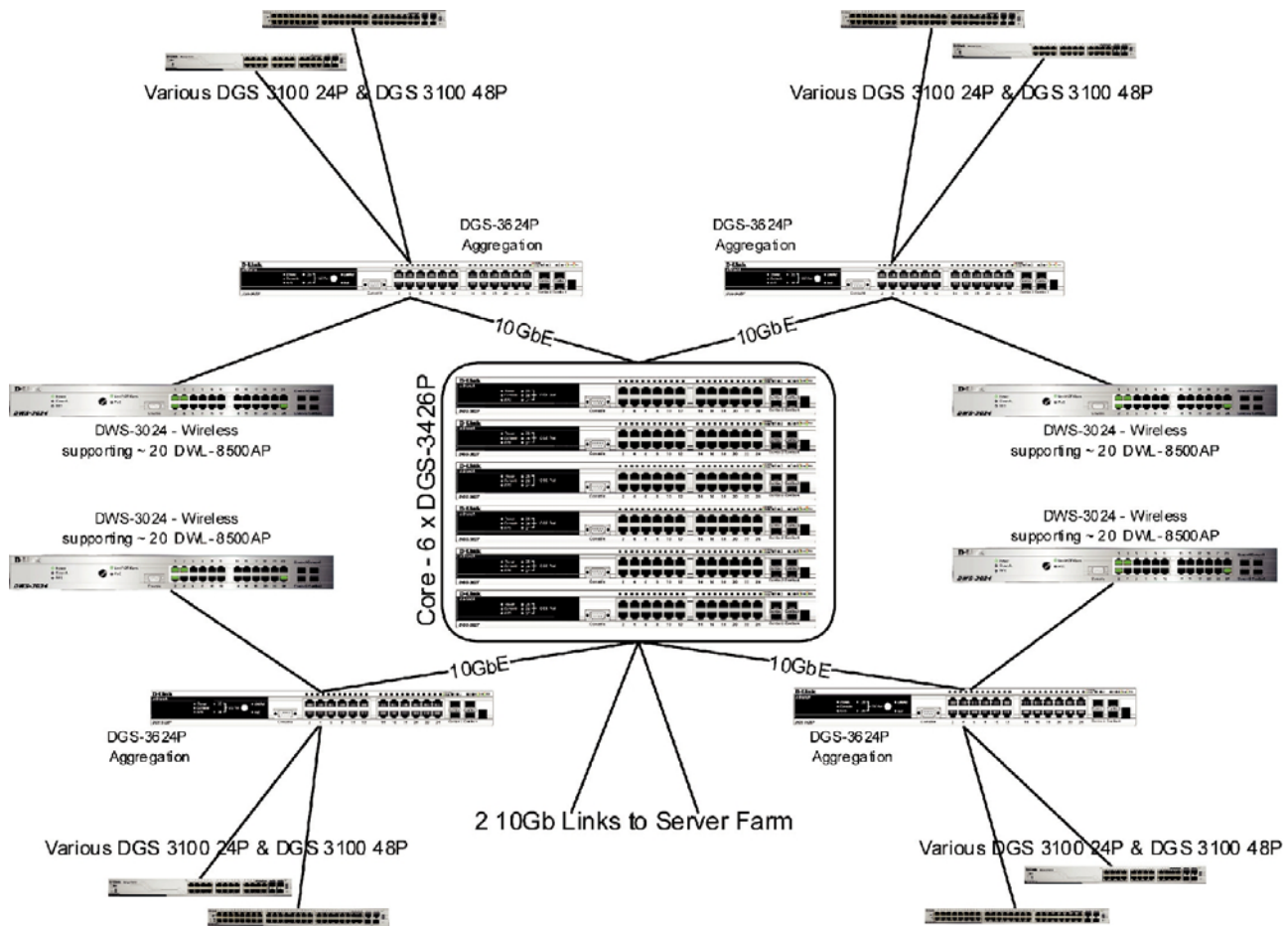
point for all our wireless access points (WAPs) with a simple, easy to use Web interface,” said Kerry Haenga, Operations Manager for Somerville House. “Tasks including WAP status, configuration and RF management can now be performed by one person.”

The School’s new Gigabit PoE network infrastructure with its 10 Gigabit Ethernet network backbone has increased the school’s network capacity and alleviated bottlenecks caused by the previous networking infrastructure. This has also allowed improved access to the high-speed InfiniBand fabric already deployed in the school’s data centre.

The new network infrastructure has also paved the way for future high-performance networking projects. These include the potential to upgrade to the latest 802.11n wireless networking standard, offering better range and faster connection speeds while the implementation of Voice over IP telephony lowers telecommunications costs. Last but not least, the new D-Link enterprise storage solution makes teachers no longer having to worry about running out of disk space and IT support staff are now able to avoid data loss.

“With three units at 22.5 Terabytes each, we now have the raw capacity so staff can continue developing the excellent digital content that they provide,” said del Manso. “From an IT support perspective, we now have more than enough space to back it all up on.”

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