

Case Study: Newcastle United FC



"Knowledge I.T took the time to understand our organisation and helped us to realise the project objectives. They have an excellent reputation within the industry and they did not disappoint us. We're looking forward to working with them on a long-term basis"

Customer: Newcastle United FC

Website: www.nufc.co.uk

Number of employees: 60

Country: UK

Industry: Sports & Hospitality

Customer Profile:

Premier league football club based at St James' Park in Newcastle, with additional services on and off site such as retail, events, training and education

Software and services:

- LAN upgrade with switch hardware
- Power Over Ethernet (PoE)
- Cisco
- Internet Connectivity upgrade

Business Needs

Newcastle United Football Club (NUFC) has been based at St James' Park stadium since 1892, making it the oldest and largest football stadium in the North East of England. With capacity for over 52,000 fans, host to international football, venue for the 2012 Olympics and 2015 Rugby World Cup, the much loved stadium along with its shops, training grounds, academies and team required an up-to-date and sophisticated communications infrastructure.

NUFC's I.T systems had been running on an ageing network infrastructure and although when originally installed, this was made up of the best technology of its time, the LAN needed to be upgraded to cope with the ever increasing demands of the football club and provide effective troubleshooting and robust security.

The integrity of their systems was a key driver for the club. And, with an increasing amount of vendors on and off site, the club had to meet PICDSS regulations (Payment Card Industry Standards Documentation and Support Services) and ensure the LAN would be flexible enough to allow different layers of security at different access points across the network. The club also needed to be able to effectively manage the traffic around the various areas as well as high speed access to information held on their servers and for troubleshooting when issues occurred.

Knowledge I.T was able to provide NUFC with detailed proposal and planning documentation in order to determine and agree project objectives and scope. Objectives included:

- Replacement communication cabinets where required
- A new fibre-optic cabling system
- Configuration and installation of Cisco switch hardware throughout St James' Park LAN and its remote sites
- Configuration of bandwidth reservation policies, controlling internet bandwidth to clients as required
- Network performance monitoring
- Reconfiguration of ISA sever to relocate it to a DMZ interface of the ASA and re-addressing of the ASA to move it to a new vLAN

The Solution

The project proposal submitted by Knowledge suggested the provision of new switch hardware throughout the LAN and Layer3 capability to allow Inter-vLAN routing and access-list based traffic control.

The solution was implemented through 3 key phases in order to realise the objectives successfully.



Phase 1

This phase saw the installation of additional cabling and also the core network upgrade. LAN routing was reconfigured alongside the ASA and the ISA

Phase 2

Phase 2 saw the addition of further fibre cabling and then began the upgrade of edge area switches and cabinets.

Phase 3

For the third and final phase of the project Knowledge continued with its upgrade of edge area switches and cabinets including the additional remote sites

The Benefits

By upgrading NUFC's LAN, Knowledge was able to provide them with a tightly managed network – giving them more control over access and providing additional layers of security and authentication and ultimately allowing them to effectively share resource or troubleshoot when needed.

The project took 18 months to complete, including the rigorous planning stages.

Working over a huge site with multiple remote locations, Knowledge was able to efficiently deliver the LAN upgrade with minimum disruption to business.

"Knowledge I.T provided us with exactly the right kind of hands-on, practical support we needed when delivering this complex LAN upgrade. The project was well designed and delivered efficiently, with minimum disruption to our business and maximum results. Knowledge I.T took the time to understand our organisation and helped us to realise the project objectives. They have an excellent reputation within the industry and they did not disappoint us. We're looking forward to working with them on a long-term basis"

Standardised across multiple sites

The club required all of its sites (on and off the St James Park premise) to have a standardised network with shared access. This kind of resource capability allows the club to share storage space, network peripherals, communicate with other users and transfer files easily, helping to reduce hardware requirements and improve productivity across all sites.

Increased security

With Two-factor authentication across areas of the server that needed to comply with PCIDSS, Knowledge was able to deliver bespoke solution for much improved security. The ability to switch layers of security on and off gives St James Park greater control when third-party vendors are operating within the premises – ultimately protecting sensitive data from loss, theft, or unauthorised usage.

Troubleshooting

The provision of the upgraded LAN network supports a number of fault tolerance features, such as disk mirroring, disk-duplexing and disk striping all with uninterrupted power supply. This improves reliability and minimizes network downtime – making the network even more productive. The improvements also enable the club to extract information from the server and switch infrastructure when needed – making troubleshooting much easier and reduces any costs associated with loss of data when there is a system down.

KNOWLEDGE I.T

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