



The City University, London

Case Study



Strategic guidance from PTS paves the way for network improvement at The City University

The Client:

Founded as the Northampton Institute in 1894 and awarded full university status in 1966, The City University, London plays an active role in the business and professional life of the Capital. Its Chancellor is Mayor of the City of London and its degree ceremonies are held at the historic Guildhall. In the UK, the University today has approximately 2,000 members of staff and 13,000 students. With 30 different buildings located across 6 major sites, it is important that there is a reliable campus network environment in place to support day to day communication requirements.



The Challenge:

PTS Consulting originally assisted the University in 2002, by delivering advice surrounding the construction of the University's new Business School. In 2004, the University established a requirement to review its IT network infrastructure, with a view to establishing a clearly defined strategy for future development. Ian Dickson, IT Manager for The City University, London, explained: *"Prior to working with PTS Consulting, the campus network infrastructure at the University had grown organically over a period of time. The City University, London, had recognised the need to develop the service delivered to our staff and students, however what we needed in order to do this was independent expertise to give us a view of what modern networks can do and the direction in which they were going."*

Between 2004 and 2006, PTS Consulting was commissioned by the University to conduct a review of its current network infrastructure, comment on its network equipment environment and cabling installation standards, and assist in the design of a campus network infrastructure in line with the identified communication needs of the University. PTS Consulting was asked to help design of a resilient network infrastructure that was fully aligned with the future business and operational requirements of the University. These requirements included:

- Support for IPv6, VoIP and IP Multicast
- Network security and access control across logical and physical network segments
- Simplified network management, with improved network activity monitoring
- Implementation of 'Out-of-Band' network management of network devices

Ian Dickson elaborated: *"Network improvement projects are not something undertaken that often. As we hoped to embrace new technology, the University retained the expertise of PTS Consulting to supplement our in-house skills. PTS Consulting had the experience and industry knowledge to help us evaluate the existing infrastructure and then help us shape an ICT strategy for future action in line with industry best practice."*



The Solutions:

Network Audit: In order to provide advice and guidance surrounding the creation of a future IT strategy, PTS Consulting undertook detailed physical and logical audits of the environment and current systems in conjunction with the University's IT staff, to provide information concerning the University's IT aspirations and user community requirements. The results of this initial audit would then allow PTS Consulting to deliver further IT Consultancy services in connection with the creation of an IT strategy for the future development of the University campus data network infrastructure and the specification of environmental standards for associated IT equipment rooms on campus.

IT Strategy and Network Infrastructure Design: In its strategic report to the University, PTS Consulting commented on the current equipment rooms and cabling infrastructure at the University and advised on remedial works that would need to be undertaken in advance of the anticipated network improvement project. Detailed recommendations for IT environments, based on BICSI standards, were included within the report. PTS Consulting also proposed a campus network design, for approval by the University, and created a specification that the University could use for the procurement of equipment and services to implement the design.

The Benefits:

PTS Consulting used its technical experience and knowledge of industry 'best practice' to develop a network strategy that the University could use as a template for the future implementation of a campus infrastructure that would meet its foreseeable business requirements. PTS Consulting also provided an estimate of the likely costs, essential for the University to be able to prepare accurate IT budget forecasts.

Key benefits that the project delivered to The City University, London included:

- Fully independent audit of existing University network infrastructure and user requirements in line with 'best practice industry standards.
- Detailed campus network improvement strategy and design for 6 sites and 15,000 users.
- Advice and guidance to incorporate new technologies and improve resiliency and network performance.
- Recommendations surrounding specification and cost estimation that the University could use for the procurement of equipment and services to implement the design.
- The City University, London now has the confidence to embrace IP networking; network security and access control improvements; network activity monitoring; and the implementation of 'Out-of-Band' network devices.





The Verdict:

Having accepted the strategy report, the University has already started to implement some of the recommendations for improving equipment environments and is actively using the document to guide its development of the campus network infrastructure.

Ian Dickson, IT Manager at the City University, London concluded: *“The City University, London now hopes to upgrade its entire campus network infrastructure based on the design and best practice advice from PTS Consulting. Thanks to PTS, the University is now confident in embracing IP networking, network security and access control improvements, network activity monitoring and the implementation of ‘Out-of-Band’ network devices. Working with PTS on this project has been an easy and thoroughly useful exercise. PTS delivered all that we asked for, with no hold-ups from start to finish.”*

About PTS Consulting:

PTS Consulting Group PLC (PTS) is one of the world's leading IT consultancies with a reputation for innovation and thought leadership. PTS is also renowned for its project management expertise. As the global leader in IT relocation projects, working with some of the world's largest companies, PTS has earned a world-wide reputation for independence, professionalism and quality of service. Headquartered in the UK and founded in 1983, PTS has worked in over 70 different countries, 250 cities and employs 330 staff in the Americas, EMEA and Asia-Pacific. www.ptsconsulting.com