JCT600: A family business at heart….

Highlights

- Arista Cognitive WiFi™ was deployed at JCT600 with approximately 10 access points across each of its 45 sites.

- Arista's cloud architecture replaced their old controllers and simplified the migration of their infrastructure to the cloud.

- JCT600 can easily manage all of their settings and security policies using the Arista CloudVision®.

- JCT600 has seen a significant reduction of time spent on network management since they are now able to quickly deploy, manage and analyze every part of the WiFi network through one centralized platform.

Founded in 1946 as 'Brooklands Garage, 'JCT600 remains a proud family business with three generations of the Tordoff family now involved. From humble beginnings, the business has grown into one of the UK's largest and most highly respected motor retailers with 45 sites throughout Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and the North East.

With 2,500 employees, JCT600 dealerships operate at the high end of the market retailing the most luxurious car brands such as Aston Martin, Porsche, Bentley, Audi, BMW and Mercedes. Yet despite the scale of the business now, with annual turnover in excess of £1bn, the Vision remains the same as it's always been 'We don't want to be the biggest, just the best! ' With digital marketing being a clear strategy amongst the leading motor manufacturers, JCT600 quickly recognised the role WiFi would play in improving its operational efficiency and unlocking their vision to be the best in the market. With only 9 people in the IT team, responsible for every element within the communications network infrastructure, this was going to be a challenge.

"Proper cloud WiFi based solutions were few and far between. We discounted a lot of them because of the cost vs. benefit. As far as I could tell, when you compared Arista Networks to other big names on the market, it was ahead of the competition in terms of its cloud platform, speed and pricing structure. It was quite an easy decision. With Arista CloudVision, we no longer have to invest in controllers or servers, and we can manage the entire system remotely from anywhere using a laptop.This is a significant benefit to us because it eliminates the need to travel across the UK to each of our 45 sites,"

– Chris Gensmantel, Group IT Manager, JCT

NEW 3008 SUV

The Challenge

The wireless infrastructure at JCT600 was initially very basic and wasn't conducive to remote working or rich media content. Chris Gensmantel, Group IT Manager at JCT600 explained, "We had mostly a desktop environment with about 70-80% of users tied to their desks. We had one access point on a coffee table offering very limited coverage, not to mention throughput and were getting complaints from customers and staff daily. It was clear we were in dire need of an upgrade."

One of the significant challenges in the JCT600 environment is the variety of building architectures across their 45 locations. They have buildings that date back from the 60's and some newly constructed. Some of the newer dealerships being constructed from glass and steel, of various sizes and shapes, present technical challenges for deploying WiFi. "Traditionally, some sites don't mind if you put WiFi points on the front door and others do. For example, our new Porsche site is a very prestigious building and they won't allow any aesthetic changes to it. In this instance, we really needed to create a high powered WiFi solution without any visible hardware. Finding a WiFi solution that was adaptable to our diverse environment was really important to us," he added.

Buildings aside, throughput, analytics, coverage, not to mention a group SSID for seamless roaming of staff would present a further challenge.

Seamless WiFi experience and continuous innovation

In searching for a suitable WiFi solution, Gensmantel looked online and discovered Arista Networks were an up-and-coming wireless vendor that were shaking up the industry with their innovation and evolution. "Proper cloud managed WiFi based solutions were few and far between. We discounted a lot of them because of the cost vs. benefit. As far as I could tell, when you compared Arista Networks to other big names on the market, they were ahead of the competition in terms of their cloud platform, speed and pricing structure. It was quite an easy decision."

Express Data, a UK based leading integrator for the supply and installation of wireless network solutions. were recommended by Arista Networks as their partner of choice for the project. Gensmantel explained, "Express Data sounded very knowledgeable on WiFi and were the first people that demonstrated a good understanding of enterprise wireless deployment. They asked us practical questions that were relevant for our business and the goals we wanted to achieve which we appreciated. We spoke to other Express Data / Arista Networks customers and received glowing responses. We were confident they could deliver what we wanted."

Arista Cognitive WiFi™ was deployed at JCT600 with approximately 10 access points across each of it's 45 sites. Arista's cloud architecture brought clear benefits over a controller based platform, providing a much more controlled migration of their infrastructure to the cloud. The Arista access point is equipped with the industry's only fully integrated wireless intrusion prevention capabilities and can be converted to a dedicated security sensor with a single click for maximum wireless protection.

After careful technical design, Express Data were able to deploy the cloud configuration and assist the JCT600 technical team with IP traffic routing and VLAN

configuration at local sites. Once complete, with WiFi propogation plans prepared, the roll out was simply a matter of installing the cabling and plugging the Arista device into JCT600's local area network. Once online, the devices automatically connect to the Arista server over the Internet where JCT600 and Express Data can manage all of their settings and security policies using CloudVision. "With Arista's cloud services, we no longer have to invest in controllers or servers, and we can manage the entire system remotely from anywhere using a laptop. This is a significant benefit to us because it eliminates the need to travel across the UK to each of our 45 sites," said Gensmantel.

Express Data have deployed thousands of access points from a range of wireless vendors, however, Arista Networks have come to be their product of choice for all their clients' WiFi needs. Simon Wilson, Managing Director at Express Data, explained, "If we have a choice we prefer to lead with Arista now. The product is robust and it just works. There is a lot of functionality and new features are rolling out all the time"

Express Data recognizes how dynamic the JCT600 environment is and exercised a great deal of care in installing the solution across all of their dealerships, being mindful of the various buildings and structures. "New showrooms pop up really quickly and Express Data work hard to make their contribution as painless as possible. They respect our showrooms. The real testament to me was when our properties department said they had never seen cabling so tidy in their life," said Gensmantel. JCT600 have been able to enjoy the sophisticated social engagement benefits of the product which has assisted with their marketing and sales strategy. "Another reason I chose Arista is the social media component. We have set up authentication plugins using social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. We have a customisable web form and have captured a lot of valuable data about our customer's behavior, their demographics and how many times they have been to visit," added Gensmantel.

Reaping the benefits of secure cloud WiFi

Simplicity, scalability, reliability, performance and security are just some of the benefits JCT600 are experiencing since the installation of Arista Network's Cognitive WiFi. They have seen a significant reduction of time spent on network management since they are now able to quickly deploy, manage, and analyse every part of the WiFi network through the one, centralized platform. "I no longer get complaints from staff and customers about our WiFi not working – it demonstrates that Arista's solutions does what it says on the tin. Our desktop environment has transformed into a mobile workforce with 70% of staff using mobile devices. It has actually created new burdens for our team as our users have higher expectations - I now have to improve other elements of the network!" exclaimed Gensmantel.

Santa Clara—Corporate Headquarters
5453 Great America Parkway,
Santa Clara, CA 95054

Phone: +1-408-547-5500
Fax: +1-408-538-8920
Email: info@arista.com

Ireland—International Headquarters
3130 Atlantic Avenue
Westpark Business Campus
Shannon, Co. Clare
Ireland

Vancouver—R&D Office
9200 Glenlyon Pkwy, Unit 300
Burnaby, British Columbia
Canada V5J 5J8

San Francisco—R&D and Sales Office 1390
Market Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94102

India—R&D Office
Global Tech Park, Tower A & B, 11th Floor
Marathahalli Outer Ring Road
Devarabeesanahalli Village, Varthur Hobli
Bangalore, India 560103

Singapore—APAC Administrative Office
9 Temasek Boulevard
#29-01, Suntec Tower Two
Singapore 038989

Nashua—R&D Office
10 Tara Boulevard
Nashua, NH 03062

arista.com