

Perth & Kinross Council

A K Bell Library

netloan Wi-Fi

case study of netloan Wi-Fi

In our case study with Perth and Kinross Council, we speak to Darren Ragsdell, Library Systems Assistant at A K Bell Library, about the implementation of netloan Wi-Fi to meet rising demands from customers.

The case study focuses on the implementation of the system, the reasons behind it, and the benefits that the library has seen since it was introduced.

background

“Over the last few years, we had seen a rise in demand for use of our public access PCs. Often oversubscribed with PC bookings, users of the library were regularly asking for Wi-Fi access in order to use their own laptops.

This is when we began our search for an appropriate Wi-Fi solution that could meet our functional requirements and at the same time meet our budgetary needs”.

the decision

To ensure that we were choosing the right Wi-Fi option, we involved Council IT Network Engineers, frontline staff, and library management in this decision. This is something I would recommend to anyone thinking about implementing a Wi-Fi solution.

At the start of the process, we were given the opportunity to find out more about lorensbergs' Wi-Fi solutions at the annual netloan user group we attended.

In addition to this, we also looked at two other Wi-Fi providers as alternatives.

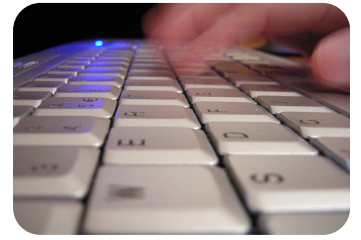
Our main requirements of a Wi-Fi system were to authenticate users with the added ability to record usage statistics. The netloan Wi-Fi solution provided these features.

As we were already a happy netloan customer and our system was familiar to both users and staff, we felt that netloan Wi-Fi was the right choice, with cost also being a contributing factor.



implementation

The installation process took place at our library with a knowledgeable and very helpful member of the lorensbergs team. They worked to get things running as smoothly as possible, liaising with our network managers on any technical aspects, including enabling our Cisco hardware to pass authentication requests through to the netloan server.



After installation, testing revealed a few issues with authentication, however these were all resolved in a new software patch released by lorensbergs.



benefits

In addition to reducing pressures on council provided PCs, the introduction of Wi-Fi has offered our library users an additional way of accessing the internet. This has been particularly useful for adult learning students who work in partnership with adult literacy tutors and community learning staff.



Features that we have found to be particularly useful include:

- the ability to use one's own device, setup and software without having to customise public access PCs
- No time limits on use for customers (apart from opening hours)
- Ability to permit/deny access to certain user groups

the take-up

Latest July 2009 figures show approximately between 10-20 different Wi-Fi users a day. This has increased steadily from between 10-15 users a day in April 2008. The number of daily logins has increased from between 15-30 in July 2008 to between 30-50 logins in July 2009.

We have had several positive comments from our users, one of which was from a local journalist,

"The library is the best place to come as it is so reliable. I have been to other places that claim to have Wi-Fi only to encounter a number of problems with access".

With Wi-Fi currently active in one site, the model is being rolled out to other sites as part of a council-wide 'Investment in Learning' Programme.



With thanks to:
Darren Ragsdell
and Jill MacKintosh
Perth and Kinross Council
A K Bell Library

