

Providing better care and connections for Maria Mallaband Care Group's Residents

Case study – BTnet and Cisco Meraki



Set up in 1996, Maria Mallaband Care Group owns more than 80 homes across the UK

Keen to keep raising its standards, Maria Mallaband Care Group was looking at how it could help its homes find better ways of working and improve residents' lives. With Cisco Meraki technology and internet services all brought together by BT, they've done just that.

Maria Mallaband aims to help its residents feel at home through luxurious accommodation, outstanding facilities and superior service. And it's a winning formula. Maria Mallaband was named as one of the Top 20 Recommended Large Care Home Groups in 2016 and 2017 by carehomes.co.uk.

The challenge

When it came to providing a fast and reliable internet connection for its staff and residents, Maria Mallaband had a problem. Previously, the group's care homes accessed the internet via ADSL broadband with routers. It wasn't always reliable, was fairly slow and lacked bandwidth. To add to this, Wi-fi was only available at reception, which was an inconvenience to residents, guests and employees who needed to connect.

"We operate in a competitive market and these days, care is more than providing a bed. Expectations are high. People are more tech-savvy and having Wi-fi can be a key differentiator for potential residents and their relatives when it comes to choosing a care home." says John Housecroft, IT Manager at Maria Mallaband.

Case study profile

Care sector
4,000 employees

Challenge

To provide high-performance, reliable networking solution that provides internet access and gives the business the flexibility that comes with working in the cloud.

Solution

Cloud-based wireless networks across multiple locations that deliver high-speed, secure and scalable Wi-fi, making it easier for everyone to connect and staff to access important digital care systems.

Products

Cisco Meraki wireless local area networks (WLANs)
BTnet

The solution

John spoke to his BT account manager, who recommended that Maria Mallaband bring all of its IT and communications together with BT. The solution to their connectivity issues came in the form of BTnet and Cisco Meraki.

Cisco Meraki is a wireless networking solution that BT have been providing to customers for a number of years. It's securely managed in the cloud and easy to configure via the Meraki Dashboard with regular, automatic software updates. Additional premises can be connected in minutes and everything from provisioning Wi-fi users to prioritising internet traffic can be managed remotely. With centralised management and automatic updates, it's much easier and more efficient for John and his team to manage the network across all of the premises, from one central location. The solution also gives John the capability to keep confidential information secure by restricting what residents can and can't see.

For internet access, BT implemented BTnet across Maria Mallaband's multiple locations. BTnet provides Maria Mallaband dedicated internet access over a fully uncontended leased line meaning everyone can get online quickly and easily. It delivers all the bandwidth they need with 100% guarantees on speed and availability.

Meraki and BTnet, all provided by BT, offer Maria Mallaband the flexibility to scale up IT as the business grows.

"This solution costs no more than our previous one but we have the latest technology, which offers us much better performance."

John Housecroft,
IT manager at Maria Mallaband

The result

John noticed the operational and financial benefits almost immediately. "It's the best thing we've ever done. The service is problem-free and the IT team is free to focus on other things," he says. "Having Wi-fi means staff can use their laptops anywhere in the building. So they have access to all the important digital care systems they need. And many of the facilities on the premises also rely on the network."

Having reliable connectivity has allowed them to roll out innovative social care management software from iCareHealth. Their people now have access to electronic care plans and medication tools, on their devices, anywhere in the building. This has completely transformed the way they provide care to their residents.

Also, it's now easier for residents to catch up with friends and family and share precious moments over a video, such as a baby's first steps or a graduation. They can keep up to date with what's happening in their local community and worldwide, so they still feel connected. They can also make the most of their leisure time with access to on-demand

TV services, as well as being able to download books, films and videos.

John is certain that BT has provided a long-term solution that fits in with the company's plans for the future and will help the management team to achieve its strategic objectives. "What's really good is that this solution costs no more than our previous one but we have the latest technology, which offers us much better performance and the choice of a wide range of capabilities in future," he says.

If Maria Mallaband expands in the future, the solution is easy to scale. John can add additional capacity, or another site without any complications.

"The wonder of this solution is that all our staff and residents can be online at the same time and we know the service can cope."

John Housecroft,
IT manager at Maria Mallaband

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Offices Worldwide

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