



Case Study: Catholic Education Western Australia

Lighting the way for digital
transformation in schools

Catholic Education Western Australia



Who are they?

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) provides a Christ-centred, student-focused inclusive approach to education for more than 76,000 young people in 162 schools and colleges across the State.

With a focus on the development of the whole person - intellectual, spiritual, social, physical and emotional - CEWA is the State's second largest education system, educating some 18 per cent of all school-aged children in Western Australia.

Unlike any other State in Australia, CEWA is united as a system of four dioceses - Perth, Bunbury, Geraldton and Broome - all collaborating to provide quality Catholic schooling across the State.

The challenge

Transforming the processes supporting education to unite and inspire

In June 2016, CEWA set a vision to provide its students, staff and communities with a world-class digital platform. To achieve this goal, CEWA implemented the “LEADING Lights” digital transformation initiative - a single digital ecosystem for all CEWA schools, early care centres and central and regional offices. The digital transformation is supported by a wide range of leaders, educators, researchers and CEWA partners. It aims to create seamless communication, collaboration, simplify administration and share analytics through a single, unified platform.

CEWA needed a multi-partner solution to accelerate and amplify its solution. CEWA consulted with Telstra to architect a solution that would support better communication channels between head office and the 162 schools in WA.

As partners in transformation, Telstra and CEWA identified the opportunity to hyper-scale the organisation's ICT innovation capacity by drawing on Telstra's extensive ecosystem of partners. Telstra's team worked in collaboration with Cisco to design an advanced digital ICT environment, working together and combining the strength of Telstra's global network and offerings, with the best of Cisco's solutions. All schools migrated to a new software platform founded on Microsoft Office 365 and a variety of Azure-hosted applications for better collaboration across the State.

“Previously each of our schools and offices operated as a stand-alone unit, with their own systems and process for everything from Financial and Learning Systems, to teaching resources and student information systems.

“Consolidating our IT systems and improving our network efficiency enables us to connect each of our schools and foster more collaboration within our own system.

“This has great potential to innovate with new practices and transform, offering our students, staff and parents a better educational experience.”

Dr Debra Sayce, CEWA Executive Director



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The solution

Reaching regional communities through network upgrades

CEWA also needed to ensure that regional and remote schools in the Kimberley region of WA received high levels of connectivity in order to participate in this digital transformation initiative.

“Our schools are vital to some of WA’s small towns and communities. Without a local school, families may relocate, and this can have negative effects on the area. We wanted to ensure we’re attracting the best teachers into our regional schools, and that means providing them with the latest tools and resources, as well as connecting them to schools around our region and across the State.”

Barry Ennis, Principal, Luurnpa Catholic School

To achieve coverage across all schools within the CEWA network, Telstra deployed Government-wide IP (GWIP) fibre services and Software-Defined Wide Area Networking (SD-WAN) for better bandwidth efficiency and application performance.

SD-WAN combines a range of technologies to ensure network traffic is routed on the best path available, improving application performance and using bandwidth more efficiently. SD-WAN also provides CEWA’s IT team with greater visibility into application performance and simplified network management.

In order to support the increased demand on CEWA’s network, Telstra used Telstra Internet Direct (TID) to create a direct, uncontended connection to the internet, with guaranteed bandwidth around the clock. Bandwidth upgrades to all schools also ensure that each department now experiences optimal speeds. A Managed Data Network (MDN) streamlined the management of network equipment and ensures the network is ready if CEWA decides to expand or upgrade in the future.





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The Benefits

Leading digital education

The consolidation of CEWA's IT has enabled the success of the LEADing Lights digital transformation initiative. LEADing Lights has been rolled out across all schools, early care centres and central offices, and is helping teachers, administrative staff, students and parents re-imagine learning experiences and accelerate administrative and school processes.

A ten-fold lift in network capacity is enabling schools to on-board onto the platform seamlessly and to quickly deploy the applications they need. Telstra's technology and partnerships have empowered CEWA schools, early care centres and head offices to facilitate a more engaged and connected community.

"For us, reliable connectivity is everything.

Working in regional and remote schools we rely on good connectivity to the Internet and with LEADing Lights we now have a platform that provides my students and I opportunities to collaborate in real time. My students are visual learners and we are now able to access information and resources from around the world and this helps make learning 'real'."

**Kerry Dermietzel Assistant Principal
Wanalirri Catholic School - Gibb River**

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