



Alamo Colleges expands WLAN for Connectivity

Based in San Antonio, Texas, Alamo Colleges District is an expansive higher education system with five distinct college campuses and 10 overall locations. With 65k students, they require hands-on IT services and Dice Communications has engaged in dedicated VoIP support with an on-site engineer. The college also requested expanded and improved wireless connectivity across the campus locations. Weak Wi-fi signals limited students' usage to indoor areas and locations with concentrated signal strength. Dice installed WLAN systems to offer improved wireless connectivity across all five campus locations.

CHALLENGE

Expand Wireless Reach for an Improved Student Experience



Christopher Delgado is the Senior Manager of Network Operations at Alamo Colleges District and he has worked closely with Dice on a number of projects including the ongoing VoIP support systems. He relied on Dice's expertise to replace old WLAN systems with upgraded hardware and high-range systems.



Need for Hardware Updates

In order to expand WLAN across each campus, new wall plates and router hardware would require installation. Reviewing dead zones and mapping new access points was important to overlap signals and provide the best possible coverage areas. The physical investigation of access points would be essentially to plan the installation.



Understanding Student Usage

Knowing where and how students are using wireless connections would serve to improve and adjust signals. Without a portal in place for signal monitoring however, this was not previously possible. Dice took the initiative to help Alamo Colleges District gather data to better understand how wireless networks would serve students moving forward.



In Search of a Dedicated Partner

While the WLAN installations are often a one-off job, Dice already had an on-site engineer and an ongoing relationship with the Alamo Colleges District. Chris Delgado was in search of a dedicated partner whom he could trust to provide a great installation and continue serving the college's best interests.

SOLUTIONS

Install Hardware and Signal Heat Mapping for WLAN

Dice Communications managed every step of the WLAN expansion and wireless upgrades with dedicated project managers. Listening to the requests from Chris Delgado and delivering a better system was the ultimate goal for this project.



Installation of Wall Plates and WLAN Hardware

The DICE Communications team installed cables and wall plates with jacks to set up for the physical router locations. WLAN hardware was installed with firewalls to protect users. The wall plate locations were thoughtfully placed to deliver strong signals to indoor spaces, outdoor areas and parking lot locations. Having the extended reach meant students could stay connected to the college's wireless systems from a much greater range.



Portal with Heat Mapping

DICE utilized a portal with heat mapping to analyze signal strength. Before and after comparisons across each campus are available for monitoring and strategic improvements and expansion of the system if desired. The heat mapping paints a clear picture of wireless strength and availability while revealing dead zones across each campus.



Dedicated Project Managers

Dice Communications assigns a project manager to every job. Delgado appreciates having someone in the director's seat so he can focus on his other responsibilities without overseeing every moving piece of the VoIP and WLAN systems. He also loves that Dice assigns a PM "regardless of the order size."



What Alamo had to say about Dice.



Dice makes it easy for us with direct manufacturer support for WLAN and dedicated account managers on every job. Their support means I can focus on other pressing tasks, knowing they have our WLAN covered."

CHRISTOPHER DELGADO
SENIOR MANAGER OF NETWORK OPERATIONS,
ALAMO COLLEGE DISTRICT

RESULTS

WLAN Offers Connectivity Across Indoor and Outdoor Spaces

The long-term success between Dice Communications and Alamo Colleges District is a clear demonstration of Dice's commitment to customer success. Dedicated project management and clear communication meant Chris Delgado didn't need to spend time overseeing the installation. He was in the loop and knew Dice had a great team on the job.



More Access for Students and Staff

The new WLAN system ultimately means students and staff can access strong wireless signals from a larger service area. Connected devices mean student populations are capable of working between classes in parking lots and outdoor spaces without requiring personal data usage. The modernized wireless system is more powerful and useful for Alamo Colleges District users.

Is your organization ready for high-level engineers and support?

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Dedicated to IT Support and Success

The ongoing relationship means Dice is available and dedicated to the Alamo Colleges District. Intimate knowledge of systems ranging from WLAN to VoIP means the Dice team can respond quickly to requests while truly understanding every system in place.

For the WLAN-specific installation, Dice Communications delivered:

- Dedicated project managers
- Expanded WLAN access points and hardware
- Heat mapping to monitor signal strength
- 24/7 support for Alamo Colleges District

The work required experts for the physical installations and off-site portal monitoring and planning. The Dice Communications team worked hard to serve the students and staff with better wireless connectivity and the entire project was a success.

