BETT Show: Kings Norton High School in Birmingham gets full wireless access with high-performance Meru WLAN

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BETT Show (D85), London, UK – 14th January 2009 - Every one of the 440 students in Kings Norton High School, Birmingham, is now able to connect to the internet from anywhere in the school, and enjoy a fully interactive experience without interference from their neighbours, thanks to deployment of a Meru Networks high-performance IEEE 802.11 wireless network this past October.

The Meru virtual cell wireless network lets students make the fullest use of their laptops, which have been provided to each student in key stage three under a government-backed e-learning initiative which will roll through to the whole school over the next two years. "We can break through our walls and bring the whole world into our classrooms at the touch of a button," says head teacher Denise Burns.

The school had previously used stand-alone Wi-Fi access points to provide coverage, but when the laptop initiative was launched, if was clear these could not provide full network access throughout the school, nor could they support high-density demands for connectivity such as when up to thirty pupils have to get online immediately at the start of a lesson.

Realizing that not all wireless architectures are capable of handling high-density demand, the school followed a recommendation from European Electronique, to test a wireless infrastructure featuring virtual cell single channel architecture from Meru Networks.

The Meru wireless network quickly showed its worth: "The features of the Meru system enable high numbers of clients to be connected," said Douglas Bonnell, network manager at Kings Norton High School. "The tests were exceptional, with more than
twenty wireless laptops in one room connecting to a single access point - all streaming video at the same time."

Another reason Meru was chosen was its ease of installation. "From initial concept to install was a very fast process and we were very pleased that all we had to do was
simply flick the switch and the whole system worked first time," said Bonnell. "To say that we are delighted with the system and installation is an understatement."

The Meru wireless network, consisting of 44 MN-AP201 802.11a/b/g access points and an MN-MC3050 controller, was installed in two days in October by two engineers from, education ICT specialist, European Electronique, Ltd. The work was done during term time, with little disruption to pupils in the school.

"Schools need proper wireless networking," said Tony Shillingford, senior account manager at European Electronique. "We've seen ad hoc networks, and they don't work.
Meru is ahead of the game in providing networks that are reliable and easy to install."

The school's network is based on Meru's virtual cell architecture, which, puts all access points on the same radio channel, in contrast to the multiple radio channels used in

legacy microcell architectures and by the school's previous standalone access points. In the microcell environment, each access point must broadcast on a different radio channel than its neighbours, which requires extensive planning of coverage, plus the necessity of running access points at less than full strength in order to fit the complex requirements of microcell.

The Meru virtual cell architecture eliminates the need for this complex planning, and also eliminates interference between access points, making network management and expansion far simpler and less time consuming.

This network can be extended at will: new access points can be added at any time, without any wireless survey work, thanks to the virtual cell architecture. "We are now flexible enough to offer a drop-in centre for parents to connect to the internet using our internet connection," said Bonnell. "This will be a key resource within the community."
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About the Kings Norton High School

Kings Norton High School is a fast-improving mixed comprehensive school for 440 children aged 11-16, who come mostly from three large council estates on the edge of Birmingham. It has been ranked as one of the three fastest improving schools in the UK. With government backing, the school has equipped every classroom with a digital projector and every teacher with a laptop PC, as well as covering the whole school with a wireless network.

About European Electronique
European Electronique is a market leader in the provision of innovative infrastructure & managed services

that transform the whole learning & teaching experience. Our success is underpinned by the award of approved supplier status for many of the government and regional procurement frameworks such as: Becta and OGC Catalist Prime Contractor. For more information, visit www.euroele.com

About Meru Networks
Founded in 2002, Meru Networks develops and markets wireless LAN
infrastructure solutions that use virtualization to deliver pervasive, high-fidelity wireless service for business-critical voice, video and data applications. The company first introduced its award-winning virtual cell wireless architecture in 2003, and Meru products embody a complete departure from typical hub-based WLAN approaches, offering a wireless solution with levels of performance, reliability, security and cost-effectiveness previously found only in wired networking environments. Meru's solutions have been adopted in all major industry vertical markets, including Fortune 500 enterprises, healthcare, education, retail, manufacturing, hospitality and government. Meru is headquartered in Sunnyvale, Calif., with offices in London, Paris and Stockholm, and operations in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. For more information, visit www.merunetworks.com

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