



PowerDsine[®] Midspans Simplify Network Management At Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts

BACKGROUND

When Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, sought the benefits of adding power over Ethernet capability to their wireless LAN and security camera installations, Michael A. Cole, Manager of Network Operations, put his in-house staff to work.

With nearly 60 buildings on the University's campus, two challenges rose to the top of their list: cost and how to cycle power on their remotely scattered devices.

Clark serves more than 2100 undergraduate and nearly 700 graduate students. Its 10:1 student/faculty ratio keeps its average class size to 20—with 96 percent of its faculty holding doctorate or other terminal degrees. The University employs more than 500, so in total there are more than 4,500 users connected to their Ethernet network

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THE CHALLENGE

Cole's existing installation of Cisco switches were installed in 2002, too recent to justify replacing with costly switches having power over Ethernet capability built in. “The cost of POE switches was prohibitive—especially when we only need a few ports with POE capability,” he explains.

So to Cole's Network Operations team, the obvious solution turned out to be the simple addition of midspan units from PowerDsine, the pioneers of power over Ethernet technology.

Currently at Clark there are 55 wireless LAN terminals and 5 security cameras installed, with “more to come,” Cole emphasizes. So far his staff has installed eight PowerDsine midspans with many more to be added in the course of the year, as time and funds allow. All new installations will use them as well, he says.

THE SOLUTION

Cole chose PowerDsine 6500 Series midspans which allow for highly secure, remotely managed power over existing Ethernet infrastructures. The 6500 Series includes six scalable models of from six to 48 ports and having total power ranging from 100W to 400W.

Of particular importance at the sprawling Clark University's campus installation was PowerDsine's exclusive PowerView Pro management feature that is included with the 6500 Series. PowerView Pro provides highly secure web-based/SNMP power monitoring and control from either a local or remote computer. It allows Cole to have direct on-line network power supervision plus complete midspan configuration, monitoring and diagnostics.

Upgrading with the 6500 Series was easy and fast for Cole and his staff to configure and install. "Some of our buildings with five or more single power injectors were unsightly and a wiring mess. So the 6500 midspans not only gave us important remote control to cycle network power--but also helped us to organize and clean up the wiring," Cole said.

THE FUTURE

Looking to the near future, Cole plans to use 6500 Series midspans to meet all his power over Ethernet needs. "As more wireless access points are installed and the wireless network grows across our campus, we'll take advantage of the cost savings of not having to buy more expensive switches with POE built in," he says.

At educational institutions like Clark University in Worcester, every dollar saved while providing efficient network services can go toward expanding the educational horizons of their students. Clark has been doing so since its founding in 1887.



For detailed information about the PowerDsine Family of products, visit www.microsemi.com or contact any of the regional offices listed below.



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