GAIA TECHNOLOGIES

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Best in Class ICT

- Lenovo Machines

- Cisco /HP Infrastructure

- Secure Wireless

- Integrated Cards

- VoIP

"The delivery of the ICT Project for the Excelsior Academy was on time with all equipment were delivered, installed and configured in time for the Academy's opening on the 21st of September 2008".
Dr. Ayad A-Mawla, Technical Director, Gaia Technologies Plc

www.gaia-tech.com

Gaia wins ICT Project for Excelsior

Excelsior Academy was set up by the Excelsior Academy Trust - sponsor Lord Laidlaw - and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and opened in September 2008.

The academy serves the community in the west of the city and actively involve families in supporting their children's learning. It is part of the Newcastle family of schools.

The Academy occupied the new state of the art buildings which allows them to deliver the ground breaking model of education. **Gaia** was selected to help the Academy deliver its ICT Project.

The Excelsior Academy is one of the highest achieving state comprehensive schools in the North East of England and wants to become the best - a entre of excellence for education. The Academy consists of Five Colleges, each with its own Principal. The smaller schools within the Academy, develop deeper relationships and lay stronger foundations for learning which underpin outstanding achievement.

The Excelsior Academy

Gaia delivers on time and on budget

Gaia was able to call on its own implementation teams to ensure that exact products were delivered and that work was meticulously planned in order to avoid any overruns. The focus and attention Gaia paid to the project meant that monies were saved from the £1.8m budget.

GAIA TECHNOLOGIES

EXCELSIOR

A state of the Art building with the State of the Art Technology.

"Successful schools are dependent on excellent staff teams, supportive governors and parents and the contribution of all the young people that they serve.."
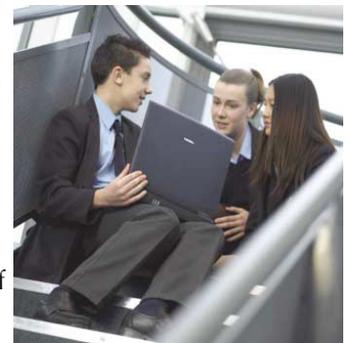
Philomena Marshall,

Executive Principal,

Excelsior Academy

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A State of the Art Building

Secure Wireless Cloud

Gaia worked closely with the Academy to implement one of the largest wireless clouds in any Academy to date to enable *Anywhere Learning*.

Over 240 Wireless Access Points were distributed in key locations of the building to enable students to securely roam without interruption in and around the building and regardless of the number of simultaneous student connections to the wireless network.

This discreet use of ICT has been a major contributory factor in the school's increasing levels of attainment as Notebooks used within a wireless infrastructure provide pupils and teachers with greater access to information across every subject.

The flexibility to learn without time and place restrictions suits the pupils' schedules, resulting in higher-quality coursework.

GAIA TECHNOLOGIES

Cisco

and HP

Blade

Servers

made up

the Core

Infrastructure

for the new

Academy

"Gaia is very proud of the ICT implementation at the Excelsior Academy."

Anas Mawla, Managing Director , Gaia Technologies Plc

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Delivery Against the Odds

The design of the building and the weather caused delays in the construction project which endangered a delay in the Academy's opening till January 2009 instead of September 2008.

There were a number of issues surrounding support infrastructure to the Interactive Whiteboards, water leaks in the Server Rooms, Construction delays that are common to such a large project.

Gaia, along with everyone else on site, worked tirelessly throughout the evenings, weekends and the insertion of multiple support teams in order to ensure that the delays do not cause the Academy to open late.

Gaia Teams received the highest gratitude from the Academy Leadership Team for their dedication and their Delivery Against the Odds!

Cisco Systems as a Base Infrastructure

Gaia worked closely with the Academy to design the state of the art LAN infrastructure.

As a leading Cisco Partner, Gaia helped the Academy design and implement a Cisco based infrastructure that would protect their investments for many years to come. With industry-leading services and performance, the Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Switch is Cisco's flagship switching solution. It delivers the most comprehensive feature sets for core or distribution deployments.

Cisco 6509 Core Switch

The design involved two 10Gbps linked 6509 switches acting as a Core and linked up to 60 Cisco 3650 Switches with teamed up 4Gbps fibre SFP in 6 distribution zones around the Academy.

State of the Art VoIP as Standard

Gaia worked with the Academy to design and implement a telephony system that is based on Cisco VoIP Call Manager and Unity.

Gaia needed to upgrade the existing system that the Academy operated and migrate its functionality to the new system.

The migration included new lines, PBX, Voice Mail, and Handsets including wireless based ones. Cisco Unified Communications Manager provides voice, video, mobility, and presence services for up to 60,000 users. The system is a scalable, distributable, and highly available enterprise-class IP telephony call-processing system.

Cisco Unified Communications Manager creates a unified workspace that extends enterprise telephony features and capabilities to packet telephony network devices such as IP phones, media processing devices, voice over IP (VoIP) gateways, mobile devices, and multimedia applications.

Cisco Call Manager and Voice-mail Unity Server

Every Project needs Leadership

A major project like Excelsior requires the dedication of a great many persons who devote time and effort to ensure its success. This is no more true than in the Leadership Team that was assembled by the Sponsor Lord Irvine Laidlaw. Under the direction of the Executive Principal and the leadership of the School Principals, all staff are responsible for ensuring that all students not only achieve their potential academically, but develop an entrepreneurial 'can do' attitude which will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives.

The Team is led by Philomena Marshall, the Executive Principal and Peter Snowdon, the Business Manager.

Largest Implementation of (IBM) Lenovo

The Academy has chosen for its user devices, Lenovo (IBM). Nearly 1400 Lenovo Machines have been deployed in the Academy. That is an average of one computer for every 1.2 students. An impressive ratio by any standard.

This all-new Lenovo equipment packs a complete, high-performance computer into a beautifully thin design incorporating widescreen. It includes built-in wireless, the new Vista and the new Office 2007. The new devices will allow the students to do everything from sharing photos to creating movies to building websites.

To complete the picture, Gaia helped the Academy specify the portable device for students and teachers. Over 1000 Notebooks have been deployed throughout the Academy using secure trolleys.

Every device comes with a host of Office 2007 and wide host of media applications. A special education pricing deal with Lenovo (IBM), meant that the Academy was able to maximise their budget.

The Lenovo R61

"I am relishing the challenges of this exciting post at Excelsior. The creation of a new school and learning environment is a great opportunity for the whole community."

Philomena Marshall, Executive Principal, Excelsior Academy

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Gaia Technologies Plc l Woodlands House l Parc Britannia l Parc Menai Bangor l Gwynedd l LL57 4FA l 0845 867 4792 l info@gaia-tech.com