

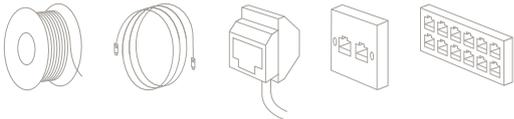
Network solutions that power business



Case Study: University of Brighton

“3M has consistently demonstrated to us a genuine desire to understand the needs and the problems of the customer. Working with 3M is as much a partnership as a commercial relationship. This is important because advice is given in the best interests of the customer.”

Technology built for business





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Like many universities, Brighton has to support large volumes of data and a variety of users and applications, typically dispersed over multiple locations. The numbers speak for themselves: over 100 buildings, supporting over 24,000 users, about 650 edge switches, at least 40 aggregation level routers and three core routers. In comparison, this puts most business networks in the shade.

Most business-critical IT services originate centrally and are delivered across the data network. This is why the structured cabling system – which connects all the voice and data network points - has to be so reliable. However, installing cabling is not straightforward. Geoff Fayers, the University of Brighton's Network Services Manager 2001-2010, explained: "The number and variety of buildings, some of which are Grade Listed, means there are restrictions on how and where cabling – which is typically contained within space-constrained wall, ceiling and floor voids - is installed."

The sheer volume of copper and fibre cable outlets is vast, including over 8,600 fibre and copper connections from 3M, accounting for more than half of the total. Use of 3M cabling products is part of the university's long-term strategy to ensure that connection points will perform well long-term. Since starting to install 3M products several years ago, the university has found that the number of connection failures has reduced to negligible levels.

The 3M product range also helps to address the problem of installation in confined operating spaces. Fred Rossington, of local firm CNC Ltd, was responsible for bringing 3M to the attention of the university several years ago and is the main installer used by the University ever since.

Said Fred: "Coupled with the smaller diameter Cat 6 copper cable that 3M supplies – which enables increased cables to be run in any given trunking – I can be confident that the networks we install using the 3M range of products will meet both the required capacity and level of reliability expected by the most demanding customer. I believe 3M makes the best termination equipment on the market. The simple design mechanics give consistent quality and it has the least failure rate in terminations compared to any other make I have tried."

This confidence is echoed by Geoff Fayers: "We trust the product and have complete confidence in getting the resources needed if ever there was a problem."

The recent upgrading of networking for the Checkland Building on the Falmer Campus put both the services of CNC and the quality of the 3M product range through their paces. Culminating in 2009, the project was five years in the planning and involved an additional 1,600 cable outlets and almost 69 miles (111 Km) of cable! Around the same time, CNC also installed the structured cabling for the Huxley Building on the Moulsecoomb campus, which although smaller than the Checkland project, still involved 980 connections.

Geoff Fayers stressed the service and support provided collectively by CNC and 3M has played a vital role. "CNC MD Fred Rossington deserves a medal for customer service. He has often installed against very challenging contractors' deadlines," said Geoff Fayers. "3M has consistently demonstrated to us a genuine desire to understand the needs and the problems of the customer. Working with 3M is as much a partnership as a commercial relationship. This is important because advice is given in the best interests of the customer."



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