

Virginia Commonwealth University

Statistics

- 31,000+ Students
 - Main Campus is in Richmond, Virginia
 - Thirty-two VCU graduate and professional programs are ranked among the best in the nation.
-

“Every day, I had dozens and dozens of people lining up for hours on end, and I just don’t have that anymore.”

– Buddy Bishop
Manager, Desktop Support



“Lines of Frustrated Users”

Virginia Commonwealth University is one of the top research universities in the United States and the single largest employer in Richmond, the capital city of Virginia. The university serves more than 31,000 undergraduate and graduate students across two campuses.

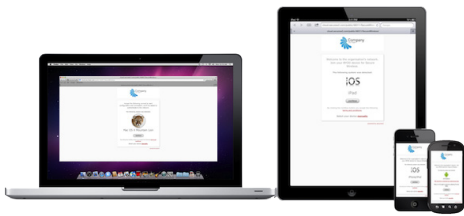
With such a large and diverse user base, the VCU Technology Services staff knew that the wireless network on campus needed to be reliable, secure, and easy to use. The school elected to deploy using WPA2-Enterprise with 802.1X authentication, offering the gold standard for over-the-air encryption and security to students and staff members.

Buddy Bishop, Manager, Desktop Support at Virginia Commonwealth University, knew he had a serious problem on his hands when he witnessed the growing mob of frustrated students waiting in line for the VCU helpIT Center, trying to resolve their wireless configuration issues.

“Students were coming to me, I’ve got lines of frustrated users down the hallway, all of them could not get on our secure wireless,” Bishop recalls. “Many of our students and staff could not get connected, and users at VCU were quickly becoming upset.”

The Challenge of WPA2-Enterprise

When deploying the campus-wide secure wireless network (named “SafeNET Wireless”), VCU chose to leverage the PEAP-GTC protocol for authentication. This protocol gave VCU flexibility, but presented some significant challenges. Due to a lack of native support, the majority of Windows users, who comprise



JoinNow MultiOS

Supported OSs	Windows XP + Mac OS X 10.5 + Apple iOS 2.0 + Android 2.1 + Linux Kindle Fire ChromeOS
Supported EAPs	EAP-TLS PEAP/MSCHAPv2 PEAP/GTC EAP-TTLS/PAP EAP-TTLS/MSCHAPv2 EAP-SIM
Deployment Options	Internal Web Server SecureW2 Cloud

roughly 60 percent of VCU students and staff, were left without any method for connecting to the WPA2- Enterprise wireless network. The second challenge presented itself when asking users to manually configure their devices for the WPA2-Enterprise network, a common pain point that most network administrators have come to recognize.

“Even when devices do natively support these protocols you are lucky, at best, after a bunch of arduous scrolling through pages and guides, to get your device configured properly,” Bishop says.

Today’s students, staff, and faculty all rely heavily on Wi-Fi for academic purposes, including online courses, homework, research, and much more. As a result, secure campus wireless has become an expectation and in many cases represents the only way a device can access critical resources.

The growth of BYOD (Bring-Your-Own-Device) means that most devices on campus today are no longer IT-owned assets, but instead belong to students and staff. While BYOD is great for productivity and mobility, it remains a challenge to manually provision unmanaged devices for WPA2-Enterprise networks.

Adding to the challenge is the fact that the quantity and diversity of devices that students and staff are bringing to campus continues to grow on a daily basis. As a result, it has become increasingly important to provide users with a simple and straightforward process for connecting on any device, while also maintaining strict security standards and protocols.

Providing simple, secure, and reliable access to the SafeNet Wireless network quickly became a top priority for Bishop and the VCU helpIT Center, who had been spending countless hours troubleshooting connection issues for students and staff members.

“I started writing scripts, but I could never get it to work,” Bishop says. As the line of frustrated users continued to grow, Bishop realized he needed to find a solution to allow users to reliably connect, without the need for assistance or a trip to the VCU helpIT center.

The SecureW2 Solution

It was around this time that Bishop decided to see if SecureW2 could help solve the multiple challenges that had placed the VCU helpIT Center in a state of distress.

After testing and evaluation on campus, VCU began to offer SecureW2 products to the thousands of users demanding access to the SafeNet Wireless network on campus.

Today, students and faculty connecting their personal devices for the first time are directed to the SecureW2 deployment from the VCU Technology Services support page. After entering their VCU credentials, the device is automatically configured with all required settings, including the installation of trusted server

certificates. The device is then migrated and automatically connected to the secure SafeNet Wireless network moving forward.

Everything is taken care of for the user, removing the burden from the VCU help IT Center while increasing network adoption and user satisfaction. No need for lengthy manual configuration guides and no more protocol or support headaches.

Lowering Help-Desk Calls

As SecureW2 simplified the process for configuring and connecting to the WPA2-Enterprise network, the number of VCU helpIT Center calls measurably decreased.

“Every day, I had dozens and dozens of people lining up for hours on end, and I just don’t have that anymore,” Bishop says.

With the WPA2-Enterprise onboarding challenge resolved, the VCU helpIT Center has saved valuable time and resources while continuing to offer the highest level of network security.

As wireless connectivity and security have become mission-critical, hundreds of institutions around the world have come to rely on SecureW2 to provide users with easy, reliable, and self-service tools for accessing secure wireless networks from both IT-owned and BYOD devices.

For VCU, SecureW2 has helped ease the pain of countless students and staff members, who are now provided a simple and straightforward solution for configuring and connecting their personally-owned devices to the SafeNet Wireless network.

www.securew2.com

North America
(888) 363-3824
(512) 900-5515

UK and Ireland
+44 11 8455 0135

Europe and Middle East
+31 53 302 0260

Email
sales@securew2.com

© 2016 SecureW2 B.V. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and copyrights are property of their respective owners.