CASE STUDY
Major Events Venue Moves from On-Prem to Cloud NAC as Part of Digital Transformation

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WALES MILLENNIUM CENTRE

Founded in 2004 and located in the heart of Cardiff Bay, Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) is Wales' national arts centre and a major events venue in the region. It seats nearly 2,500 guests, and hosts events ranging from performances by the Welsh National Opera, to concerts, West End musicals, an annual arts festival and more.

Increasingly Cloud-Friendly

WMC has been a long-standing customer of Portnox, having signed on to use Portnox CORE, our on-premise network access control (NAC) solution, in 2012. By early 2020, however, WMC was in the midst an internal push for digital transformation, which focused on adopting cloud technologies in exchange for existing legacy on-premise systems. "Moving from on-prem to cloud is something we've begun to undertake over the last year across nearly every system that we use," said Richard Williams, IT Infrastructure Engineer.

After migrating WMC's payroll system to the cloud, with several other systems also awaiting migration, Williams and his team began to assess the venue's current cybersecurity posture. "For a while now, I have been looking at various aspects of security across our business. We're looking to tighten things up, and much of that has begun with training for staff, such as teaching people to be more aware of phishing emails, etc. It's now time to begin really assessing the systems we have in place, particularly when it comes to network security," Williams continued.

As the team turned its focus to its existing network access control capabilities with Portnox CORE, it decided that this component of the cybersecurity stack should also migrate to the cloud as part of the WMC's digital transformation program.

Elevating Network Security

As a public venue, WMC is open to a variety of non-staffers for long periods of time throughout the day. "On a daily basis, we have large numbers of contractors, performers – all kinds of people in the backstage area – and historically we had limited visibility of what was being plugged into our network," Williams went on to say.

With a number of wired ports located throughout the building, as well as a guest wireless network that was freely accessible, this limited visibility meant that WMC's network was especially vulnerable and could potentially be breached by anyone with a moderate level of IT know-how.

"While we hadn't fully leveraged all of the functionality available to us within Portnox CORE, I knew that Portnox CLEAR would be a much better fit for us as an organization after seeing it in action," Williams stated. "With Portnox CLEAR, we can simply login and see exactly who is on the network, via which access layer, their device type, etc. We have much more visibility and control today as a result."

Better Agility & Visibility in Times of Crisis

As the Coronavirus pandemic unexpectedly swept the globe in the early months of 2020, WMC's choice to transition to Portnox CLEAR's cloud-delivered NAC-as-a-Service yielded a surprising benefit. "As a public events venue that had to shut its doors for several months due to the pandemic, we were forced to downsize our staff and send most of the remaining workforce home to continue operations," Williams went on to say.

With an uncharacteristically large remote team, Williams and his colleagues were able to extend Portnox CLEAR's NAC capabilities to the organization's VPN access layer, ensuring that the corporate network, resources and various enterprise cloud applications were being accessed by remote staff in a secure manner.

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> - Richard Williams, IT Infrastructure Engineer @ WMC

Future-Proofed for Whatever Lays Ahead

While the future for nearly every organization remains uncertain as the pandemic drags on, Williams and WMC are confident that Portnox CLEAR will continue to deliver the needed stability, visibility and control it requires to keep its network safe. "From the end-user's point-of-view, Portnox CLEAR is very stable. My team connects to CLEAR first thing in the morning, and simply disconnects at the end of each day. Now, we always know what's happening on the network. There are no blind spots," Williams explained.

With Portnox CLEAR, WMC is future-proofed for any new network security challenges that lie ahead, thanks to the platform's superb uptime, on-going upgrades, and flexibility to manage from anywhere if needed.