



Old school MEETS new school

Edinburgh Napier University streamlines long-distance learning with joint collaboration solution from Cisco and CirQlive.

“Now users can schedule a whole semester’s worth of classes in just a few clicks.”

- Iain Bruce, Senior VLE Developer, Edinburgh Napier University

How do you extend your reach, both locally and globally, while tightening your budget? For Edinburgh Napier University the answer is in bridging the gap between campuses, each approximately 3 miles apart. Without online collaboration tools, a weekly in-person meeting often required attendees to drive a car or take a cab, and those expenses add up fast.

Challenges

- Geographically dispersed campus made in-person meetings costly and inconvenient.
- Distance-learning programs in Malaysia, India, and China required dependable, user-friendly online tools to maximize interaction in collaborative workspaces.
- Virtual learning environment required a separate sign-in process, resulting in a significant administrative burden for IT staff and limited adoption of collaboration technology.



Case Study | Edinburgh Napier University

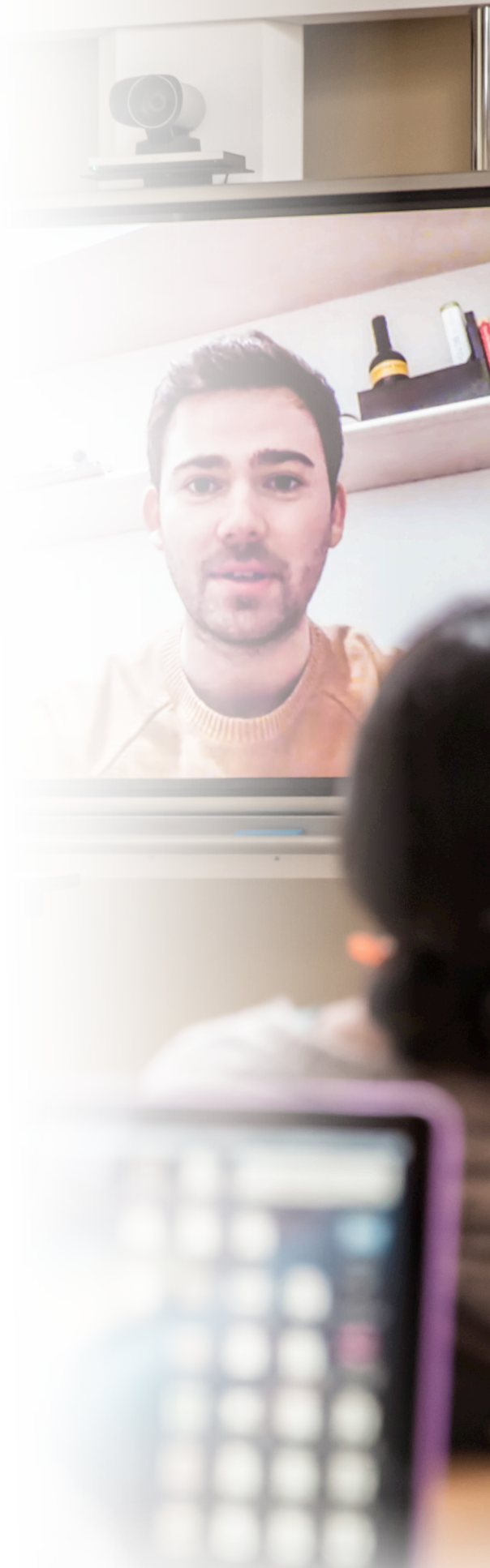
Size: 17,000 students, 1300 staff | Location: Edinburgh, Scotland | Industry: Education



The problem of distance became a truly global concern as the university's business school began offering distance-learning courses to students living in Malaysia, India, and China. These courses gave the university an opportunity to reach a whole new population of students, generating significant amounts of new revenue with a minimal capital investment in new facilities. The university is strongly committed to improving services for all of its users, and the challenge was to provide a richly interactive classroom experience for students on the other side of the world.

Working with Cisco WebEx® online meeting software, the university was able to offer social workspaces in the cloud, giving students opportunities to collaborate more closely and productively with their professors and fellow students. "WebEx provides a platform for students and lecturers to share knowledge and experiences with each other from the comfort of their own homes," says Dr. Susanne Cruickshank, senior lecturer and reader in cancer nursing at Edinburgh Napier.

At first, however, users were generating a large number of IT support tickets just to engage in these collaborative workspaces. The main problem was that meetings in Moodle, the university's virtual learning environment (VLE), required a special setup process that significantly complicated long-distance collaboration, not just for faculty but also for IT team members performing administrative tasks on the back end. "Every time a faculty member wanted to set up a collaborative session within our Moodle environment, they needed to submit an IT support ticket that would take a significant time to complete," says Iain Bruce, a senior VLE developer at Edinburgh Napier. "We wanted our IT team to be focusing on more strategic tasks, rather than being burdened with administration."





Seamless blend of Cisco WebEx and CirQlive MEETS drives user adoption and heightens security.

Solutions

- Cisco WebEx collaboration software produces a richly interactive, long-distance learning environment.
- Joint collaboration solution from Cisco and CirQlive provides a virtually endless array of options for optimizing the management of Moodle.
- Single sign-on is now possible through a Microsoft Active Directory portal.

University simplifies the management of Moodle credentials

By collaborating with CirQlive, a Cisco® partner with a strong focus on VLE optimization, the university's Cisco WebEx and Moodle applications became instantly available to users with one click. CirQlive Media Enhanced Education & Training Suite (MEETS), the company's flagship offering, is a powerful and reliable solution for minimizing IT administration in long-distance learning environments. The relationship with CirQlive is yet another example of the power of the Cisco partner ecosystem, giving customers an endless array of options for optimizing the management of proprietary applications such as Moodle.

Before integration, users didn't schedule many meetings

Employees scheduled only about 10 Cisco WebEx meetings per month. Now that number is more than 50. "From an IT perspective, the CirQlive solution eliminates a huge amount of work on the back end," says Bruce. "Collaboration no longer requires an IT support ticket taking over 5 minutes to set up because all credentials are processed through a single Active Directory portal. Now users are empowered to schedule a whole semester's worth of classes in one click. That level of convenience and control is the kind of thing that helps us attract and retain students and staff."

WebEx integration

BEFORE

10
meetings
per month



AFTER

50+
meetings
scheduled
per month
with one
click



More secure procedures are often the simplest

That's especially true with login credentials because multiple usernames and passwords are far more likely to create security gaps. For Edinburgh Napier, a more integrated environment stands a better chance of keeping users' personal data out of the wrong hands.



Results

- Cisco WebEx adoption grows from 10 to more than 50 meetings per month.
- Single-click access speeds meeting setup and empowers users to manage their own meeting schedules.
- Simpler sign-on process promotes tighter security.

Long-distance learning expands

At Edinburgh Napier University, the joint solution from Cisco and CirQlive is just in the first phase of its deployment, giving faculty the ability to create and manage collaborative workspaces. The next step will be to extend administrative rights to students in the 2015–2016 academic year, opening up a huge number of possibilities for long-distance learning while continuing to eliminate the need for IT staff to manage separate Moodle credentials.

More information

- To find out more about Cisco collaboration solutions, visit www.cisco.com/go/collaboration.
- To find out more about CirQlive, visit www.CirQlive.com.

Products and services

- Cisco WebEx solution
- CirQlive MEETS



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