



“At the same time students and staff have greater and greater demands for comprehensive Wi-Fi for multiple devices, we have deployed a robust solution across the entire FSW campus with Aerohive, and have witnessed a legitimate surge for collaboration and digital learning. From moving away from traditional note taking to team collaboration from anywhere, having a robust Wi-Fi network is changing the landscape for our students, and encouraging centric research and greater innovation in our operations. We look forward to working with Aerohive as we evolve and expand our Wi-Fi network to meet emerging requirements and come up with efficient solutions.”

— **Dean Phetterplace**
Director,

Network Systems & Infrastructure
Florida SouthWestern State College

Florida SouthWestern State College

Distributed College Campus Overhauls Wireless Network to Meet Campus Density Demands

About Florida SouthWestern State College

Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW) was founded as Edison Junior College in 1962, and was renamed in 2014 and is a member of the Florida College System. FSW serves a five-county regional area in Southwest Florida, serving more than 22,000 students from its four campus locations and employs approximately 1,500 faculty and staff. The college covers an area of more than 5,000-square land miles and offers five bachelor’s degrees, 21 associates degrees and numerous certificate programs.

The Challenge

Approximately eight years ago, FSW underwent a comprehensive technology infrastructure upgrade, including implementing a wireless network at all campuses. At that time, the college also saw 50 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in online courses, and was also supporting more technology initiatives in classrooms, such as wireless projectors and two-way video technology.

Fast forward to the last several years, FSW underwent additional upgrades of the wireless network, but was facing greater saturation at all campus locations, and needed to better support robust data requirements for students.

Classroom technology use was a huge driver for re-evaluating the legacy systems in place, as a greater number of complaints were pouring in and pushing for better coverage in classrooms to accommodate video and faster connection speeds. With more and more devices, increased use of education apps like Canvas and expectations to provide robust Wi-Fi, the IT team began to pursue a comprehensive enterprise wireless solution to meet demands.

The Solution

After evaluating leading solution providers, Florida SouthWestern chose Aerohive for a comprehensive Wi-Fi upgrade across all campus locations. The leading factors for choosing Aerohive included the ability to provide robust coverage in the newly constructed Suncoast Credit Union arena, ability to segment users, devices and traffic with varied credentials, and price performance. Aerohive’s predictive analysis tools were also instrumental to effectively design the network for full coverage.

All campus locations had a site survey ahead of the deployment, using structural design documents, floor plans and building plans to ensure coverage and a smooth rollout across more than 40 physical buildings located in four counties. Aerohive’s heat mapping tools were invaluable for planning comprehensive coverage, with full classroom coverage and more than 600 access points deployed across the campus, with continued expansion across the institution.

FSW implemented an Aerohive solution with AP230, AP1130, and AP245X access points, with HiveManager Online for cloud-based network management. The AP245X access points with external antennas are situated in the Suncoast Credit Union Arena, a 75,000-square foot facility with Wi-Fi coverage to ensure guests can access the wireless network from anywhere in the building during basketball tournaments and large events, and to power devices used for ticket scanning and other functions. Aerohive’s Private Pre-Shared Key (PPSK) feature is used for special events, setting up an expiration time for network availability and providing greater security with easier network management, including customized bandwidth limitations.

The IT team has set up separate SSIDs for students and administration, and will also consider moving to HiveManager NG for next-generation cloud network management with advanced features.

Why Aerohive

- Price performance was superior and allowed for maximum coverage with fewer required access points, including the use of external antennas
- Features like PPSK allow flexibility without complexity to segment users via the cloud and provide self-registration
- Cloud network management is simplified to deliver Wi-Fi to four locations and to over 22,000 students

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