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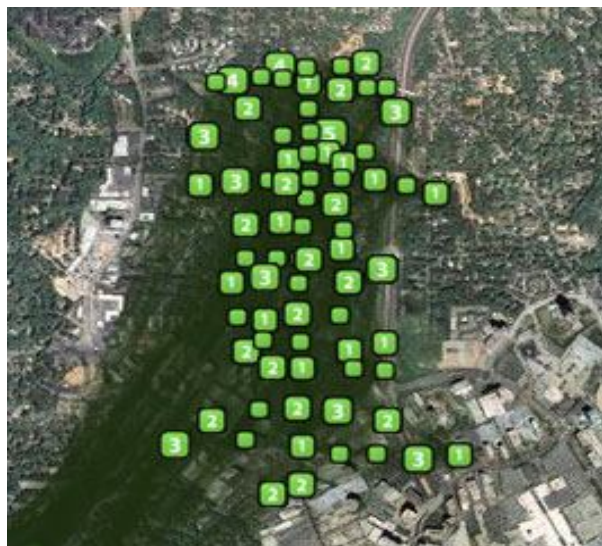
AUTHORIZED MERAKI CHANNEL SALES PARTNER
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Residential & MDU: The Barclay Condominiums

"We went with Meraki because anything else was cost-prohibitive and harder to maintain. Meraki is just clearly the best for a residential deployment."

– Josh Needle, IT Professional, ImCorp

Josh Needle is an IT professional with IMCORP, Inc, a systems integrator based in Atlanta. He has deployed approximately 20 million square feet of indoor and outdoor wireless in his career, primarily in the manufacturing and distribution sectors. But when a condominium homeowner's association came calling, he had to find a new solution for a new type of customer.



The Barclay condominium complex in Georgia had a serious problem. The property manager had relied on the recommendation from a local integrator to deploy a series of bridged consumer grade wireless access points on each floor, with the hopes that the signal would penetrate thick concrete and rebar walls between residences with the access points mounted in the hallway. "It was a complete failure," says Needle, "And it trashed the available bandwidth because the original deployment did not adhere to wireless best practices for channel selection." The homeowners association had paid over \$7,000, and had an unusable network.

Challenge

Provide inexpensive but reliable high-speed wireless to all tenants of a 15-story condominium complex with 1-2 foot-thick concrete and rebar walls

Restore tenant and management satisfaction burned by experience with WiFi

Meraki Solution

Initial Deployment:
110 Meraki Indoors

Cost: Extremely Affordable

Results

Solution deployed in 1 day

One year and counting, no wireless coverage failures-- even with localized power failures in specific units, Meraki automatically re-routes

Wary of the feasibility of ANY wireless solution, the Barclay contacted IMCORP, Inc. and asked for a consult. Mr. Needle performed a one-day survey and feasibility test on one floor using Meraki equipment. He ordered 6 indoor units and initially deployed three, one in the access closet on the test floor and one at each end of the hall where the consumer grade units had been mounted.

The deployment strategy was tested using wireless propagation analysis techniques used in warehouse and distribution facilities which confirmed that coverage using the existing layout was insufficient. Once it was discovered that this configuration was unusable, the network was reconfigured using the wireless propagation software to determine the optimal node placement to both maximize coverage and backhaul routing. Bingo – the mini-network study proved that coverage could be achieved and he convinced the property owner to replace the consumer grade network with Meraki.

Needle ordered 110 Meraki Indoor units in total, an average of 7 units per floor with spares, with a gateway on each floor and a repeater in units on the ends of the floor. "It took one day to deploy, and the most time-consuming part was the physical mounting of the units," he said. "It was an amazingly quick and easy deployment, especially given the building construction."

As soon as the units came online, the network was live and residents instantly had access. "We were seeing 2 gigs of traffic per day in the first week!" said Needle. When a resident complains of a weak signal, Needle doesn't even have to come to the site. "The maintenance man can just call me and I can test a unit remotely while he moves the node around the property for maximum signal," he said. "I can sometimes see a Meraki go offline on the Dashboard, but I have never had a single resident experience an error because the signal just automatically hops to the next node." With 15 units connected directly to the internet as gateways, one on each floor, if there is ever a loss of power or connectivity at a gateway, the adjacent nodes on the floor automatically reroute traffic.

Needle kept a few extra Meraki units on hand at The Barclay in case any that he installed happened to fail. A year later, "They still have them. There hasn't been a single failure."

Now the Meraki network is the primary way residents at the Barclay connect to the Internet. Each had been paying about \$42 per month for Internet through the phone or cable company. “Now you have these people getting Internet for almost nothing. It adds up to less than a dollar a month per resident when the cost of the DSL is split between the units and all of the cost is covered by their homeowners’ dues.”

Needle and IMCORP, Inc. have led with Cisco wireless solutions for years, but now have begun to deploy Meraki in residential areas. “We went with Meraki because of the complexity of the deployment,” Needle said of the Barclay experiment. “Anything else was cost-prohibitive and harder to maintain. Meraki is just clearly the best for a residential deployment. ”

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