

PLC MELBOURNE PROTECTS ITS COMMUNITY'S IDENTITIES WITH CLOUDWORK®

Keeping school communities connected



At a glance

How PLC Melbourne implemented a solution that would provide its users with a single sign-on and automatic provisioning of accounts, while ensuring their users' identity is safe and ownership not compromised.

Key Benefits



BUILDING SCHOOL COMMUNITY



PARENT-FRIENDLY ACCESS



CONTROL OF CLOUD SERVICES



PRIVACY OBLIGATIONS

CHALLENGE



Presbyterian Ladies' College (PLC) Melbourne is a leading ELC-Year 12 Christian independent school for girls with an outstanding academic tradition, an international focus and strong pastoral and co-curricular programs focusing on encouraging leadership, service and life-long personal development and learning.

The Director of ICT and the Leadership Team understood the value of identity management solutions offered by Studentnet, but they also foresaw a potential threat to the ownership of their users' data. The challenge was two-fold:

The Inevitable Move to the Cloud

The move to the Cloud is inevitable as schools seek cost-effective, technically efficient methods to engage their communities.

PLC's stakeholders, like most groups working with a supplier with an essential function, have shifted their expectations towards cloud-based communications and mobile-friendly interfaces to help simplify processes including approvals, form completion, and data management.

The School's Relationship with Community

Adopting additional Cloud-based offerings will help PLC and other schools with their stakeholder engagement into the future. It will enable faster and more targeted communications with key audiences, better two-way reciprocal sharing of information and help keep stakeholders up-to-date with information relevant to their requirements. Cloud-based communications will therefore complement and enhance face-to-face and on-site engagement, by moving appropriate content into channels better suited for the purpose.

There are many groups within the PLC community, with different engagement requirements including:



Students

The core community. However early learning, primary and secondary students have different requirements and must be treated differently.



Parents

The key decision makers that must be satisfied with the quality of education and ease of communications.



Staff

Expectations and requirements are greater than ever before, especially regarding transition to Cloud.



Many-in-One

Parents and staff may also be alumni of the school as well as members of other key stakeholder groups.

"Cloudwork® was a solution that will more effectively engage our various stakeholders whilst complimenting and enhancing our 'on premises' services."

Brenton Harty, Director of ICT, PLC Melbourne



SOLUTION



Studentnet's Cloudwork Identity Manager as a Technical Solution

Studentnet started in 2017. PLC's Director of ICT and the school's leadership team sought a solution that would help them gain the budgetary and functional advantages of cloud services from within their local networks.

Studentnet's Cloudwork Identity Manager achieved this through integrated operations that use identity management as a data-exchange facility between disparate applications. This maintains control of the school's private data independently of cloud services and delivers an on-brand user experience.

"Schools need to maintain a relationship with students, teachers and parents across many decades. Cloudwork means that the school controls the identities - not large multinational IT and data companies."

Kevin Karp, CEO, Studentnet

APPROACH



Beyond a Technical Solution

The solution satisfied all technical requirements, yet PLC was thinking beyond the technical aspect.

Understanding the value of the school's community and precious nature of identity ownership, they questioned the legal aspect of identity ownership.

This was the first time a client not only understood but also challenged the agreement to ensure that users' identities remained strictly under the school's ownership.

Cloudwork Identity Manager has grown out of this real-world usage; evolving through consultation with its customers.

Brenton Harty, Director of ICT, PLC Melbourne

"As a company working closely with ELC - 12, Studentnet understands the educational IT landscape and tailored a solution for our needs."



IMPLEMENTATION



There were two aspects to the solution that affected implementation:



Single Sign-On

The best way to implement Cloudwork Identity Manager was to implement a staged process that prioritised single sign-on. This delivered immediate benefits, was highly visible to the school community, and its implementation was relatively straightforward.



Automated Provisioning of Accounts

Automated creation of accounts using the school management system as the source of truth followed. Several details had to be clarified and decided so that the automation process would not create any obstacles in the future. For example, the format of an email address at a school may seem like a trivial detail but is far from it. It is not unusual for the format to change because several different generations of IT policies have been applied throughout the years.

PLC's IT team collaborated with Studentnet through the process of detailed data mapping to resolve data integrity issues, and ensure a smooth adoption of automating provision. This was conducted during school holidays to avoid inconveniencing the school community.

IMPACT



The biggest impact for IT team is the knowledge that their community's user identities are safe. The Studentnet's Cloudwork Identity Manager has:



Reduced Risk

Key intellectual property is backed up independently of cloud providers and under the school's direct control, regardless of the actions of employees or their change of status.



Reduced Administration Cost

Account IDs and passwords are maintained in one place instead of many.



Increased Convenience and Productivity

Users need to only remember one ID and password to access multiple sites; they sign in once, and access many different services.



Improved Brand Recognition

Access to company facilities occurs under the PLC brand.



Improved Integration

Corporate management and IT systems can still be integrated with cloud services.



ADDED VALUE



The unexpected added value for PLC Melbourne was also:



Provisioning of Services

Because Studentnet is a dedicated education provider, they understand the services schools need and negotiate suitable provisioning and set-ups accordingly. However, these learnings don't work with all EdTech providers and sometimes accounts need to be pre-set. There are many occasions when Studentnet has gone above and beyond to provision such accounts for PLC, which is an added value born out of their mission to help make schools' IT processes as seamless as possible.



Creation of Groups

Cloudwork also sets up groups for the school (i.e., security groups, interest groups, year groups) so that they can be read from the internal source of truth - the school's management system.

"Studentnet does all the heavy lifting to make the Cloudwork solution as seamless and intuitive as possible."

Brenton Harty, Director of ICT, PLC Melbourne

FUTURE COLLABORATION



Over the years Studentnet has been working with PLC to build a product that is highly tailored to suit their identity-management requirements.

PLC has been an excellent client due to their willingness to communicate and the fact that their Director of ICT has been a champion for the sensible and pragmatic use of technology that enables users without compromising the school's vision and values.

It has helped Studentnet enhance, extend and improve its product, both in terms of features and support and given Studentnet's technical expertise and positioning in the Australian educational market, has resulted in product enhancements that have satisfied PLC's needs and paved the way for improvements for many other schools across Australia.

Get in touch

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Presbyterian Ladies' College Melbourne

For almost 150 years, PLC has been at the forefront of girls' education, inspiring our students to follow their passions, explore every opportunity and achieve to the very best of their abilities.

Nurtured within a strong Christian community, our girls care for and respect one another, becoming global citizens with an informed understanding of other cultures and a deep appreciation for the world around them.

At PLC our focus is on the whole student, supporting each girl's academic, emotional, social, creative, physical and spiritual wellbeing. Personal achievement across all areas of ability and endeavour are carefully nurtured and celebrated as part of their individual learning journey.



Independent girls' school



www.plc.vic.edu.au



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Cloudwork Identity Management

Studentnet's Cloudwork Identity Management product has grown from the need for large network operators to gain the budgetary and functional advantages of cloud services from within their local networks. Over recent years we've been listening to their comments and building a product to suit their identity management requirements.

Because Cloudwork has grown out of real-world usage, we've had the opportunity to subject it to testing and examination by many different external bodies.

Implementations using our technology have been recipients of awards for privacy, security and innovation.



Identity and Access management for Schools



www.studentnet.id



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PLC has become more secure, efficient and effective in its data management process with the adoption of these cloud-based services.