



Capital S.M.A.R.T Repairs

- Australian vehicle repair service partners with Meraki for efficiencies & growth
- Capital S.M.A.R.T Repairs maximises usage of secure SD-WAN and MV smart cameras
- ROI for Meraki solution proven in 12 months along with 50% cost saving



With a customer dropping off or picking up their vehicle every 15 minutes at one of its workshops in Australia and New Zealand, Capital S.M.A.R.T Repairs is a fast-paced, high-volume panel-beating business.

Since founded a decade ago in Melbourne, Capital S.M.A.R.T Repairs ('S.M.A.R.T') has grown to 51 sites servicing 180,000 vehicles per annum. The company now operates 200 workshops and is fully owned by Suncorp. With a mission to continue its growth, S.M.A.R.T has an 11-person IT department, 450 information workers, and another hundred employees who connect to the network in the production area.

Challenges - Moving to the Cloud

Brought on board in 2016, John Bajan, Chief Information Officer at S.M.A.R.T, knew the business would need a cloud strategy and an enterprise-grade solution to achieve operational efficiencies and aggressive growth plan. This change in direction led to the re-evaluation of the network architecture and expenditure. The IT department embarked on a large-scale digital transformation project.

Initially, S.M.A.R.T was evaluating a public cloud solution before choosing Meraki in a two-way vendor race. Fahd Khan, Infrastructure and Operations Manager at S.M.A.R.T, said that switching their entire hosted program to cloud was a key step for the team. "The legacy solution was very costly and difficult to manage. We would have encountered a lot of challenges implementing the cloud strategy."

IT Team Proving ROI in 12 Months

"Cost was a key factor. We were running MPLS via the cloud in Australia and then internationally to New Zealand, which was incredibly expensive. We calculated ROI for the Meraki solution and it would take just 12 months to break even," shared Bajan.

Continually setting up new workshops often involves consolidating or replacing old cabling and systems left behind by predecessors. Switching over to Meraki provides S.M.A.R.T with significant savings by identifying inactive services and infrastructure that were redundant for many years but are still being paid for. In one workshop it has cut the cost by 50%.

He also outlined other key factors behind their choice to Meraki:

“Firstly agility, it took more than two weeks to deploy a new site - just too long. Secondly, performance via the cloud. MPLS was slow and we needed better networks and connectivity.”

Despite good level of security with legacy solution, the team didn't have access or control when it came to managing the network. This was a key issue they needed to address while S.M.A.R.T set up a new site every month.

Meraki deployment was described as 'a plug and play.' "Give me any kind of network and I can make it happen in no time. We proved it with the trial sites in Hobart and Christchurch. Meraki stood up to the test and delivered exceptionally," stated Fahd.

Product Deployment

Hundreds of Meraki devices were deployed throughout the workshops in Australia and New Zealand; all managed via the centralised, web-based dashboard. A summary of the Meraki portfolio that were deployed:

- Access points (MR wireless)
- Switches (MS)
- Secure SD-WAN (MX appliances)
- Endpoint management (Systems Manager)
- Smart cameras (MV)

With the entire network managed via the cloud, S.M.A.R.T's IT team is focused on maximising usage of secure SD-WAN and MV smart cameras.

SD-WAN

In digitising its workshop model, one key SD-WAN benefit is cost savings. These include replacing MPLS, leveraging cloud-based applications, configuring multiple sites in a few clicks; and easily handling growing demand from the branches.

“With Meraki installed we have a quality customer feedback and ratings voice service for the first time. Voice can now go across SD-WAN via VoIP, consolidating the organisation back to 5 PABX.”

— Fahd Khan, Infrastructure and Operations Manager

Delivering the power of networking and increased bandwidth at less cost, Meraki SD-WAN is the quickest and easiest way to significantly reduce WAN costs while delivering high performance for critical cloud applications.

MV Cameras

With the MV Smart Camera, S.M.A.R.T now has visual on dashboard, data analytics and MV API, with no complex add-ons or extra plug-ins needed.

The team initially tested two MV cameras, while analysing how existing security cameras had performed in a recent remote security incident. "The incident showed we needed a better solution that works well for both security and analytics. There were good security cameras in place, but we couldn't centrally manage them through the cloud."

Unbelievably simple to deploy, configure, and manage via the dashboard, Meraki cameras provide S.M.A.R.T with reliable security and valuable business insights. Security is ensured automatically using publicly signed SSL certificates and all the data are always encrypted by default. With high demand for Meraki devices from operational staff, the project team is now looking at new ways the cameras could help staff. These include handling motion detection tasks, during heat processing, and improving number plate recognition.

Summary of Outcomes

"Meraki has become seamless for our team to use. You can configure it easily and it does a really good job. We're now really seeing the value of helping new customers in workshops" said Fahd.

To future-proof its business, S.M.A.R.T will continually refine what a good workshop looks like. One that's efficiently set out for workflow and coping with a constant high volume of vehicles, with Meraki's help.