

## Design Within Reach enhances customer experience with a custom web app and nationwide in-store WiFi

- ▶ Meraki 802.11n access points provide WiFi for headquarters, 47 stores, and distribution warehouse
- ▶ Built-in stateful policy firewall and WPA2-Enterprise authentication ensure PCI compliance
- ▶ Studio proprietors easily deploy plug and play access points without on-site IT
- ▶ Meraki Cloud Controller provides centralized management of all APs via a web-based dashboard
- ▶ Custom 3D room planning application increases engagement and interaction with customers

"Our customers are very tech-savvy," said Roger Mueller, Director of IT at Design Within Reach (DWR). "They're extremely leading edge. They're carrying iPhones and iPads, and they want to be able to check their email, their stocks, and the weather, no matter where they are."

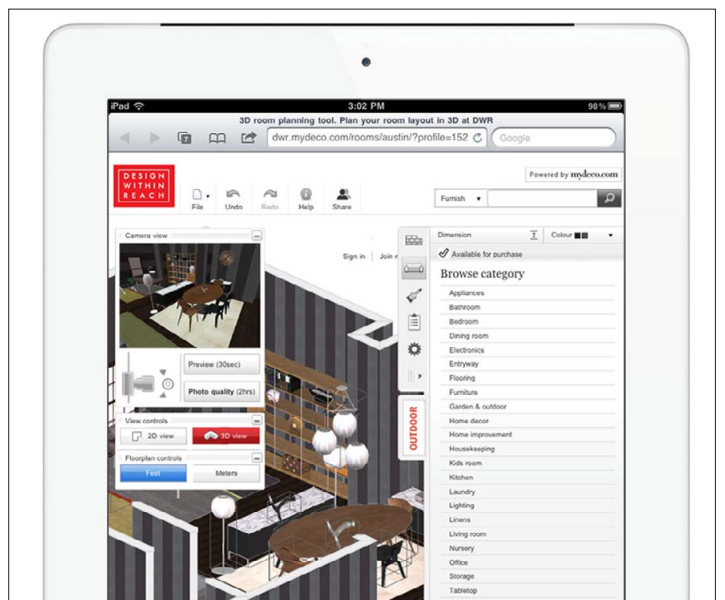
For his part, Mueller wants these customers to be able to check their devices while sitting in an ultra-modern Design Within Reach chair. Design Within Reach is a premier furniture retailer specializing in modern design, with 47 studios nationwide.

When Mueller joined DWR at the end of 2010, the company had no wireless networking, even at headquarters. A self-described "wireless guy," Mueller saw an opportunity: bring WiFi into the headquarters, the distribution warehouse, and all of the stores, and demonstrate how it increased staff mobility and customer engagement.

"Wireless is really a utility now, like electricity or water," Mueller said. "I wanted our customers to feel at home in our stores." In addition, because DWR does not sell furniture directly from its studios, Mueller wanted to get customers onto the DWR website to see more inventory and start ordering.

Mueller heard about Meraki's cloud managed WLAN solution from friends at his previous company. After trying Meraki 802.11n access points (APs) at headquarters and a few stores, he was immediately hooked on managing the entire network via Meraki's intuitive web-based dashboard.

Mueller got all 47 studios online in less than a month, without ever going onsite or hiring outside contractors. "I've installed several other vendors' solutions, and this is so much easier," he said. "It's truly a breeze."



Top: Design Within Reach's San Francisco studio now has WiFi.  
Bottom: MyDeco, DWR's custom 3D room planning application.

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Perhaps because he is the only person directly managing the wireless network, Mueller takes particular pleasure in describing how easily he brings a new store online. “First I punch the serial numbers into the Meraki dashboard,” he said. “Then I send the equipment to the store. I ask the studio proprietor to plug the AP into the switch and hang it as high as possible. Five minutes later, I ask her to take her laptop to the farthest away point and tell me how strong her signal is. The part I really love is that I can see immediately in the dashboard that the AP is connected. And I don’t have to do anything else – the AP automatically downloads its configuration settings from the cloud, based on the profile I set for all the stores, and I’m done.”

DWR uses a hub and spoke network architecture, sending traffic from all of the stores and the distribution warehouse back to headquarters in Connecticut. Meraki’s built-in stateful firewall with user and group policies, guest access with LAN protection, WPA2-Enterprise authentication, native Active Directory integration, and rogue AP detection ensure PCI-compliant network security at all locations.

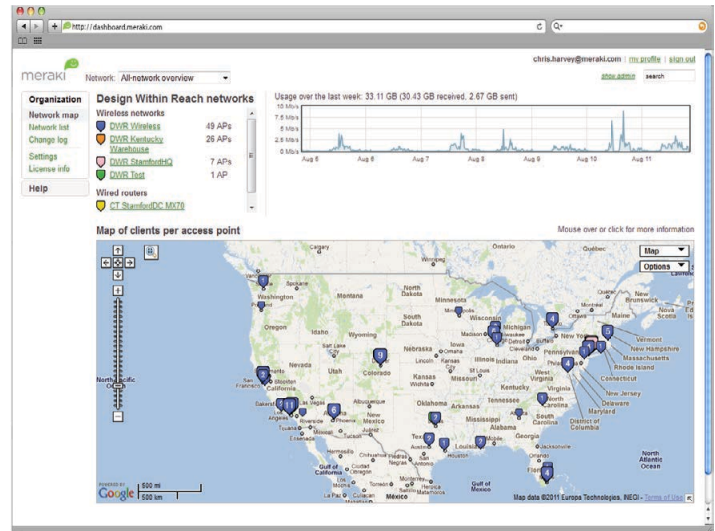
*“Meraki’s products give us powerful new tools to provide the security, capacity, and management that we need in a premium retail environment.”*

*- Roger Mueller, Director of IT, Design Within Reach*

“I wasn’t concerned about having the guest WiFi at the studios running on the same infrastructure as the corporate network, because the NAT functionality is built in to the Meraki wireless,” Mueller said. “There’s no way anyone can get access to my local LAN.”

At the warehouse, the wireless network supports the scan guns used in the loading and unloading process, while other clients are blocked from accessing the LAN. At headquarters, Mueller created two secure SSIDs for corporate-owned laptops and for iPads, both of which can access the internal LAN, while a third SSID provides wireless access for guests, blocked from the local LAN.

The ultimate goal of the WiFi network at the studios, Mueller emphasizes, is to encourage customers to buy more furniture. Mueller created a Meraki-hosted splash page – customized with the Design Within Reach logo and a colorful image of a group of chairs – to greet customers accessing the network. From there, customers sitting comfortably in a DWR chair can visit the DWR web page to check product colors, can read their personal email, or can start building a three-dimensional room plan using DWR’s custom web application, MyDeco.



*Mueller centrally manages all 47 DWR stores, as well as headquarters and the distribution warehouse, from Meraki’s web-based dashboard.*

DWR recently launched MyDeco to allow customers to mock-up a room with Design Within Reach products. The application provides a 360 degree view, in full color and to scale. It’s a great sales tool, Mueller says. “The studio proprietors can work with the customers to make the room really pop,” he said. “Then, instead of somebody buying a chair or two, they want to buy the whole room.”

Jocelyn Greenberg, Studio Proprietor at the original Design Within Reach store in San Francisco, is enthusiastic about how in-store WiFi facilitates connection with her customers.

“We want this to be a place where people come in, bring their iced coffees, and experience us as part of their lifestyle,” she said. “Being connected to the Internet is huge – it’s a reason to stay in the studio and build a relationship with the space. Studies show that the more time someone spends in a space, the more money they spend as well. Here, customers can browse more of our products while they’re actually in the space, and we have more of a chance to interact with them.”

MyDeco, of course, provides the most opportunity for customer interaction, and some DWR stores are providing in-store tablets for customers to work on. “Customers can share what they’re working on in real-time, and it creates a whole different dynamic in the store,” Greenberg said. “I’m looking forward to having MyDeco parties. This opens up new ways for us to be creative with our clients.”

Mueller said he believes more technology is always better – as long as it doesn’t require more headcount. “With Meraki, I’m self-sufficient.”