



Les Mills

- Global fitness company, based out of NZ, uses Meraki MR, MS, MX, and EMM
- Network gear configured remotely and immediately ready to go when powered on
- Ability to monitor network health and address concerns directly in dashboard

LES MILLS

“Meraki has been quite a success story for us.” This was what Mike Mason, the Technical Lead at New Zealand-based Les Mills first said. Mason looks after all of Les Mills’ internal systems and has been with the organization since it was a small startup. He’s seen the fitness company take off from 20 people to 500+ people on its global growth

journey over the years. Today, Les Mills creates the world’s most popular group exercise programs, supported from 30 offices around the world, in order to deliver these programs to over 18,500 licensed facilities where they’re taught by 130,000 certified instructors to millions of people each week in 80 countries. With the goal to create unmatched group exercise experiences for fitness facilities, Les Mills is on a mission to create a fitter planet.

Mason assesses all new internal employee-facing technology that

the company is looking to roll out. “I generally find, prove, and deliver all new technology solutions and Meraki was one of them,” explained Mason describing his role, one certainly filled with novelty and a host of challenges alike. Though the team operates out of New Zealand, the UK, Japan, Germany, the Nordics, and the US, the internal IT team is very lean, hence one of the reasons Meraki was the perfect fit. While multiple local and international IT partners provide help desk support for Les Mills staff, Mason’s team brings in the new technologies and helps launch new offices. This diverse team required a single platform that offered visibility and management tools that lent itself to easy and hands-off management. Additionally, as Les Mills has expanded its footprint geographically, Mason has relied on Meraki to standardize what is deployed. Mason takes on the role of setting the standards, and his global team of IT vendors manage the networks once they’ve gone live.

Prior to discovering and deploying Meraki, Les Mills had a smaller footprint to look after, but the network devices were extremely

complex and painful to manage remotely. Upon switching the network to Meraki, wireless APs were deployed first, followed by switches, security appliances, and finally Systems Manager. Everything was easy to deploy, particularly as “I could configure the devices in Auckland and ship the equipment on-site without having technical resources on-site. All that was needed was for someone to plug in the device and it would be ready to go immediately.”

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From a management point of view, the visibility in the dashboard allows IT to make decisions quickly and with the right information in mind. From experiencing a complete lack of visibility and information to seeing security and traffic flows, and being able to address concerns directly in the dashboard, Mason’s team has undergone a 180 degree network experience transformation.

In Les Mills offices globally, guest networks have been set up, along with splash pages to give suppliers and visitors access to Internet, particularly because many trainings are hosted in-office and, prior to Meraki, the wireless would fail as it couldn’t handle the load. Now, the wireless APs can handle the traffic coming through, but the team can also easily install a brand new AP by firing it up and plugging it in – it really is that easy. From there, the team immediately sees the new green dots pop up on the global map view, network topology page, and device list view, all of which resonate with non-technical people when explaining the success and impact of Meraki. The

wireless heatmap attracts lots of eyes as well whenever it’s pulled up on a screen.

Across the different regions that Les Mills operates in, Mason assigns different dashboard access policies so access is locked down regionally to what people actually need to see. This is the same for any partners Mason works with so they can help diagnose when needed. But overall, Mason still maintains the company-wide governance.

When the team first started considering implementing an enterprise mobility management solution, the head of IT was convinced to move forward with another vendor solution, but Mason convinced him to look more closely at Meraki. As a result, over 1000 devices have been enrolled in Systems Manager, as many employees have multiple devices. Today, all company-owned servers, virtual machines, and cell phones have been enrolled. Mason laid out three goals he had in mind when rolling out EMM:

1. Higher focus on securing devices because there’s visibility about vulnerabilities.
2. Asset management and the ability to keep an eye on device inventory all over the world.
3. The idea of having a head office is dying and the goal is to deliver technology and applications easily.

“We’re trying to automate things as much as possible without needing a concerted help desk.”

As the company has continued to move towards a cloud-first strategy, and as acquisitions have come and gone, the company has seen many business changes. However, from a technology perspective, Mason has integrated the networks, all with the help of Meraki. Through this process and the visibility that the team now has, he’s discovered some shockers when it came to how the network had been previously exposed. “It’s been valuable to put the technology in, look at what’s going on, and once there’s a real picture of what’s happening, to do something about it.”