



## CASE STUDY

# Simplifying IT operations while reducing network maintenance and facilities costs

# Clarks

## Highlights

- MS switches provide LAN connectivity across corporate and U.S. retail locations
- Rapid connectivity for seasonal pop-up stores provided by MG gateways
- MT sensors and MV smart cameras streamline facilities management and reduce operating costs

Meraki switches deployed to **29 corporate locations** and **180 retail stores**

Meraki MX appliances deployed to **330 retail outlets** globally

**97% reduction** in time required to update switches

**3% reduction** in energy costs for IT facilities

“The biggest benefit we’ve achieved with the Meraki solution is speed of delivery and the ability to change quickly.”

**DAN FLETCHER**

Service Manager - Networks and SecOps Team Lead, Clarks

#### LOCATION

 Somerset, UK

#### INDUSTRY

 Retail

#### PRODUCTS

 Switches

 Gateways

 Sensors

 Smart cameras

## Overview

Founded by two brothers in 1825, Clarks championed the first mechanical process for shoe-making in Britain. A global company with operations in the UK, the Americas, Europe, and Asia, Clarks depends on its corporate network to provide the performance, reliability, and security needed to serve customers and maintain its status as a trusted global brand.

## Challenge

Dan Fletcher heads up the Clarks network team, which is based at the company's headquarters in Somerset, UK. His team is responsible for fulfilling the LAN and WAN requirements for the business globally, ensuring connectivity, security, performance, and uptime for Clarks' UK headquarters, regional offices, warehouses, and its hundreds of retail outlets worldwide. Fletcher's team is also tasked with serving a wide variety of groups across the organization, each with its own unique needs.

Not surprisingly, given its size and the scope of its responsibilities, the team places a high value on networking solutions that can be managed efficiently and cost-effectively. Agility is also critical in this dynamic sector, as technology and business requirements can and often do change on a dime. These qualities are especially important as the business continues to grow and its networking requirements evolve.



## Solution

Clarks' journey with Meraki began in 2017, when the network team identified a need to upgrade the switching capabilities in its global network. Some of the company's head office teams were experiencing challenges with network speed and performance, and maintaining and upgrading the legacy switches was becoming increasingly labor-intensive and costly.

After evaluating its options, Clarks selected Meraki MX to upgrade its SD-WAN fabric and Meraki MS for its switching needs. Meraki switches use a template-driven approach to configuration, which makes them quick to install and easy to manage. This same approach is making it possible for the network team to equip Clarks' 350 retail stores in the UK with Meraki MX over the next 12 to 18 months.

Clarks has also taken advantage of Meraki's cloud-managed smart cameras to secure and manage its physical environment more intelligently. The network team first used Meraki MV smart cameras to monitor activity in its computer room, then installed a series of cameras outdoors around its headquarters. Hourly security rounds are now a thing of the past, as security staff use the Meraki dashboard to monitor the premises and only act when there's a potential threat.

Finally, Clarks is taking advantage of Meraki MT sensors to monitor and fine-tune temperature and humidity in its IT facilities to protect networking equipment and reduce its environmental footprint.

## Results

Since adopting Meraki solutions, Clarks has realized significant efficiencies and cost savings across several key business areas.

The network team has seen a dramatic reduction in the amount of time it takes to perform software updates, along with a corresponding reduction in costs. Previously, updating all 127 legacy switches in the network took 36 hours to complete, placing a heavy burden on the three-person team.

The company has seen a 3% reduction in energy use with the installation of Meraki MT sensors in its IT facilities and data centers housing networking equipment.

This represents not only an important cost savings, but also aligns with Clarks' overall environmental sustainability goals and its commitment to minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

“ With Meraki switches, we just need to set a time for the upgrade to happen, and everything is done automatically. We confirm that the switches have been updated and confirm there are no issues the next morning. The whole update process requires less than an hour of work.”

**PAUL DAVEY**

IT Service Specialist - Networks, Clarks



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