

WPP

Workplace Transformation Delivers Sustainable Vision at WPP

Cisco network intelligence drives carbon reduction and smarter facilities management across creative transformation business.

Image by AsymmetricA / BDG architecture + design



The customer summary

Customer name
WPP

Industry
Marketing and communications

Location
Headquartered in London and New York; offices globally

Number of employees
>109,000



Challenges

- Use IT transformation to support dynamic workplace culture for 109,000 employees worldwide
- Support goal of net zero scope 1 & 2 emissions by 2025, and scope 3 emissions by 2030
- Enable dynamic management of space and resources



Solutions

- Cisco Meraki™ MT sensors
- Cisco® LAN and Wi-Fi estate across over 1000 offices globally
- Cisco Catalyst® 9000 Switches



Results

- Supports sustainability agenda with smart facilities management, reducing energy spend and global carbon emissions
- Creates flexible office space with complete workplace mobility for up to 80,000 campus-based employees
- Creates platform for prototyping new technologies and workstyles

WPP is the world's largest marketing and communications services company that uses the power of creativity to build better futures for its people, planet, clients and communities.

Reinventing creativity on an ever-broader canvas, WPP is bringing together unrivalled talent, resources and skills to provide an integrated offer of communications, experience, commerce and technology for clients.

The company has a global network of more than 109,000 people operating in 110 countries. Their award-winning agencies work with the world's biggest companies and organisations, including 317 of the Fortune Global 500, 30 of the Dow Jones 30, 62 of the NASDAQ 100 and 61 of the FTSE 100.

“We’re embarking on a transformation journey to reimagine IT at WPP. A key element of this includes delivering on our global campus vision. To support us on this journey, we will be working in partnership with Cisco to define our connectivity vision and examine how our spaces and people work, so that we can continuously evolve our ways of working in line with our sustainability goals.”

Rachel Higham

WPP Global Chief Information Officer

Transforming the world's largest marketing and communications services business

WPP's greatest impact can be seen in the work they do for clients, which has the ability to shift the perceptions and behaviours of billions of people worldwide. With purpose becoming an increasingly important driver of future growth, WPP is focusing more and more on how it can role-model sustainable excellence across everyday operations.

As such, WPP wants to reimagine its workplace and supply chain.

The organisation is currently undergoing a rolling programme of transformation, which includes the delivery of a global campus vision. This ambition will see 85,000 of its employees move into at least 65 world-class, net zero campuses by the end of 2025, powered entirely by renewable electricity.

"As we collectively move towards an increasingly digital future, IT will play a critical role in helping to turn this ambition into a reality," says Rachel Higham, WPP Global Chief Information Officer.

Reflecting on the 'why' that sits behind this ambition, she says: "It's simple – we're doing this because it's the right thing to do, and with Cisco we're confident we'll be able to get there."

Through the delivery of this vision, WPP will realise a 20 percent reduction in physical office space.

"We all need to do our part to ensure a healthy planet for future generations and there has never been a better time to seize the opportunities before us. At WPP we're determined to do our very best and are excited to partner with Cisco who is supporting us to not only meet, but exceed, our sustainability targets – inspiring our clients to realise their potential too."

Rachel Higham

WPP Global Chief Information Officer

These reductions will support the group as it works to meet the carbon emission reduction targets to which it is committed, in line with the Paris Climate Agreement.

The transformation aims to create a more agile, connected and collaborative network of companies.

"This is a live experiment that will help us to deliver on our mission to build better futures for our people, planet, clients and communities," Higham says.

For WPP to maximise the impact of its campus project, it needs to create smart, flexible workspaces. It wants sensors to monitor space and energy use and to provide the option for flexible working across buildings, while also having the security and control to allow teams to test new technology.

Buildings as live experiments

As one of the building blocks behind this transformation, Cisco's technology will play a key role in helping to deliver a seamless and sustainable connectivity experience for WPP's campus-based employees.

Cisco is also key to WPP's smart building strategy. Cisco Meraki MT sensors are helping uncover new insight across a range of environmental factors, including heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and power consumption, with a goal to include air quality and other elements.

This insight informs new efficiencies, accelerates innovation and helps meet the WPP's sustainability targets.

“The more data we have, the more knowledge we generate, and the more insight we can respond to,” says Colin Macgadie, Chief Creative Officer at BDG, architects of the smart campuses, and a WPP company.

WPP will use its campuses as “live experiments,” Macgadie explains. The design of new buildings will be informed by the experience of previous offices; each building itself is designed to be flexible enough to continuously adapt to local demands.

“Sensors mean we can break down the building zone-by-zone. Data can tell us which parts of the building are being used and we can use observational analysis to learn how the space is being used,” he says. “We need change to be meaningful and measurable.”

Ideally, at least half the space at each campus will be shared space – cafes, meeting rooms and lounge areas, where employees from different agencies will be encouraged to meet, mingle and collaborate.

“Creativity is often about finding a fresh perspective,” Macgadie adds. “The design should encourage employees to move around the building, finding spaces in which they enjoy working. We don't need people to be seated at one desk all day. Our buildings should support a healthy way of working.”

“We don't just have a typical customer/vendor relationship with Cisco, they are an extended part of our IT family. The relationship is very much two-way. WPP will use its transformation, and its changing requirements, to inform Cisco product development – getting early access to new products and we can offer Cisco an experimental environment on a global scale.”

Mark Cameron

WPP Head of Enterprise Technology Architecture

Bringing together global talent

The Cisco engagement underpins a WPP that is collaborative, more flexible and able to deliver at scale. Increasingly, WPP is being asked to assemble multi-agency pitches or client servicing teams – the versatility of the new campuses and the smart technology that they provide will better enable this.

Workplace mobility will allow multi-agency project teams to assemble on campus or online; the physical space can be quickly reconfigured for new business pitches or client meetings. If there is long-term empty floorspace, WPP can lease the space to tenants or clients, with a complete office-as-a-service.

“We'll be constantly examining how our spaces and our people work. The Cisco network gives us the flexibility to continuously adapt,” says Higham.

The new London campus features ‘dancing walls,’ portable space dividers with wireless technology embedded, that can be moved to create new spaces. Other walls feature ‘wormholes,’ always-on video links, that connect to teams in WPP offices elsewhere in the world.

“It is technology in the service of collaboration,” explains Cameron. “We want to encourage cross-pollination across agencies, teams and locations.”

Local autonomy also extends to community partners. WPP wants its new campuses to be good neighbours: the Cisco network can be opened securely to onsite third parties – hosting art exhibitions, food nights or accelerator programmes for start-ups.

Smarter spaces are also more sustainable spaces. Cisco Meraki sensors will track a range of energy and environmental data. This will help reduce usage and costs, and also make for a better working environment. For instance, WPP wants to create 'library-like' silent areas to allow employees space to think. There will be audio monitors to track noise pollution. Heat maps will show busy routes and pinch points in the new campuses – vital data as employees return to the workplace but perhaps not in the same patterns as before.

Cisco Meraki sensors in the campus data centres are already enabling WPP to reduce energy consumption across its heating and cooling infrastructure. WPP asserts a 44 percent cut in cooling energy and a 27 percent drop in total energy consumption for its data centre in Sea Containers House, London, thanks to closer monitoring. This monitoring, and the savings, will be replicated worldwide. Globally, it is estimated that this will equate to a reduction in carbon emissions of 86 kilotons – the equivalent of planting 1.5 million trees per annum.

The ability to monitor globally distributed data centres was only achievable thanks to the power of the cloud-first Cisco Meraki platform. The automatic and wireless connectivity to smart cameras enabled the sensors to be deployed in minutes at each location. Once connected to the platform, data centre activity could be tracked, monitored and managed remotely.

Higham believes IT can reduce its own energy-related emissions by 60 percent and help buildings achieve 30 percent reductions. WPP's success in hitting these targets, and the route it took to get there, will be used to help clients in their own journey.

“Our clients are undergoing their own digital transformation,” says Higham. “Our own experience gives us credibility in conversations around new workstyles, office design, sustainability and global collaboration.”

Learn More

Please visit: meraki.cisco.com

Product list

[Cisco Meraki MT sensors](#)

[Cisco Wireless and Mobility](#)

[Cisco Catalyst 9000 Switches](#)