



Multinational conglomerate deploys secure WiFi

ESSAR Group uses Cisco WLAN to provide seamless connectivity to employees and guests

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ◆ Customer Name: ESSAR Group
- ◆ Industry: Steel, Oil & Gas, Power, Shipping, Manufacturing, IT
- ◆ Location: Mumbai, India
- ◆ Number of Employees: 70,000 people across 20 countries

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

- ◆ To provide secure WiFi access to visitors and guests
- ◆ To provide seamless wireless connectivity to employees on travel

NETWORK SOLUTION:

- ◆ Secure WLAN setup for seamless connectivity across locations
- ◆ Single solution that integrates with a variety of user mobile devices

BUSINESS RESULTS:

- ◆ Ease of administration improved by 80%
- ◆ End user productivity increased by 60%
- ◆ User satisfaction improved by 70%

Business Challenge:

The ESSAR Group is a multinational conglomerate and a leading player in the sectors of steel, oil & gas, power, communications, shipping ports & logistics, construction and minerals. With operations in more than 20 countries across five continents, the Group employs 70,000 people and has revenues of about USD 15 billion. Headquartered in Mumbai, the ESSAR Group has more than 26 offices across India.

VIP visitors and promoters who came for meetings with senior executives at ESSAR needed secure WiFi access at the office premises. Owing to challenges in security, ESSAR could not provide them with seamless connectivity to the internet. Similarly, employees from ESSAR who were on travel were looking for ways to securely connect back with their colleagues in office, for meetings and discussions. Although ESSAR had implemented WLAN across five of its offices earlier, it was unable to meet these needs. Typical challenges in the existing architecture included:

- Lack of standardization on wireless
- No proper security framework
- Role-based access control for users could not be provided
- Single sign on for users not possible
- Secure guest access was not implemented
- Provisioning proper guest access was a nightmare for the IT team
- Integration with user handheld devices (Black Berry, i-Phone etc) was not feasible

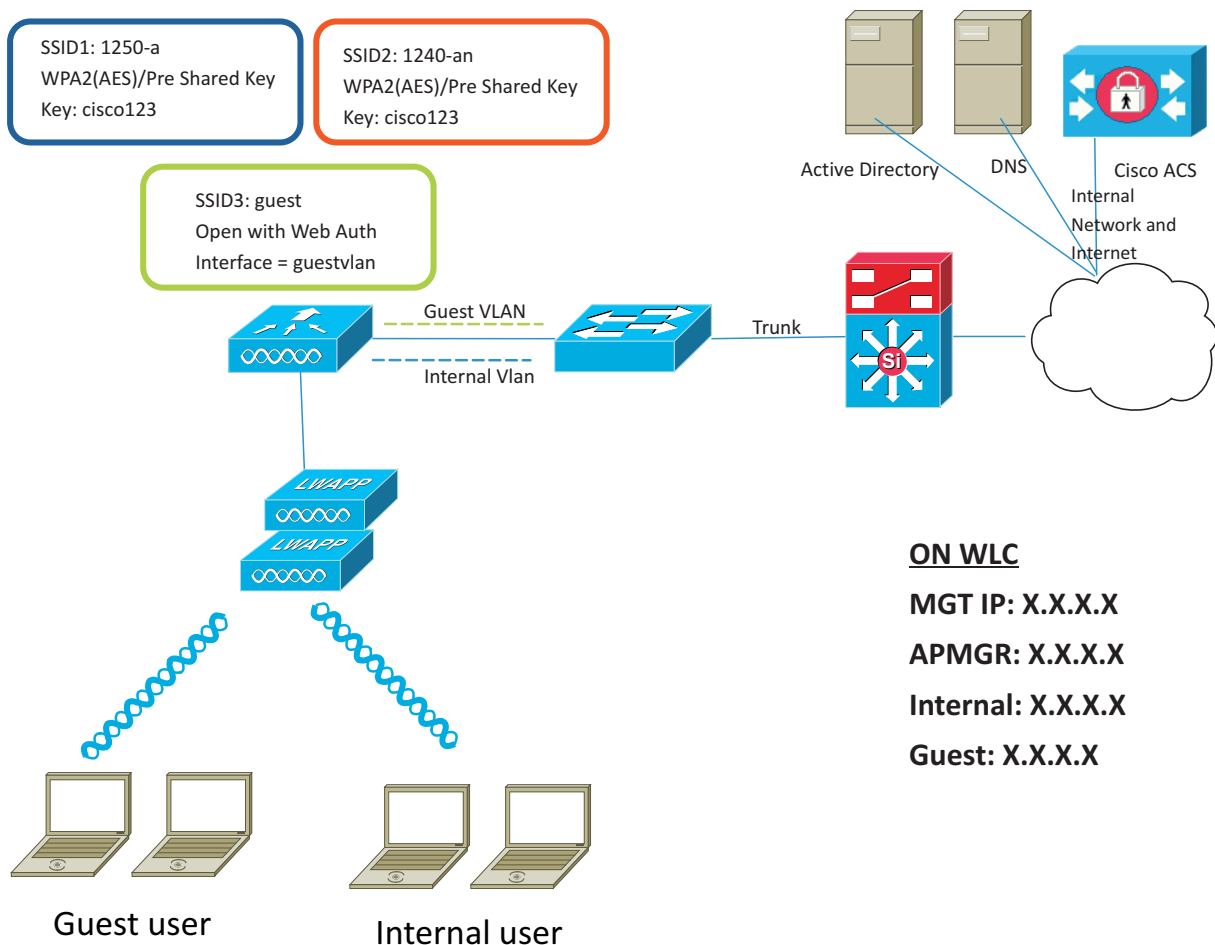
The impact of these inabilities on the business was huge and needed to be rectified at the earliest. ESSAR was seeking a WiFi infrastructure along with requisite security measures to overcome the challenges that its employees faced.

Network Solution:

ESSAR has traditionally been an early adopter of technology. Currently the Group uses a Cisco Layer 3 network with 3-tier architecture at its premises. Before the current implementation, the company had deployed WLAN across five of its offices but could not fulfill the requirements of its employees as regards provision of seamless, secure connectivity. This resulted in a negative impact on the business and ESSAR began to look for an alternative.

ESSAR had engaged with Cisco since long and used Cisco technology to its advantage. Cisco's proven benefits also added a level of comfort, and provided ease and reliability, as regards the use of its products and solutions. This made Cisco a preferred vendor of choice against all others in the current deployment. ESSAR deployed Cisco Light Weight Access Point Solution comprising of WLAN Controller 5508 and Cisco Aironet 1242 & 1252 as Access Points. Cisco WCS was used for the management of

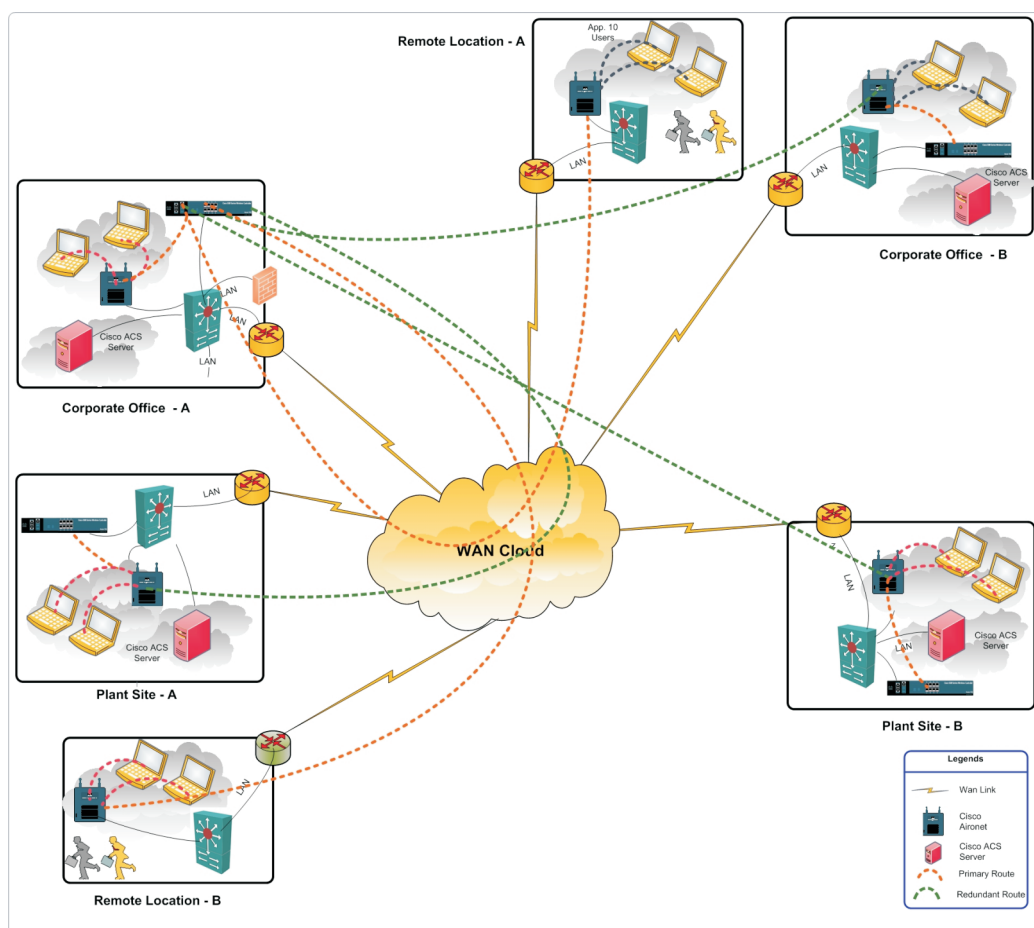
Fig 1: Wireless POC Topology



WLAN infrastructure and its security policies. While there were initial glitches as regards some access and authentication, the same were rectified in time. Currently the company has installed four Cisco WLAN controllers at its Corporate Offices and Plants Sites. While the remote location primary controllers are located at the Corporate offices, ESSAR has created five virtual area networks (VLANs) for WLAN on core S/W, along with one for the management of network WLAN (ESSAR employees, restricted users, ESSAR guests and users of BlackBerry phones.) Each of the WLANs has different user access levels.

The implementation of the Cisco solution has enabled ESSAR to provide a seamless, ubiquitous, simplified access to its employees as well as visiting guests on a single WiFi infrastructure along with requisite security. The high point of the implementation is that the solution can be integrated with laptops, BlackBerry phones, iPhones, iPods and Tablets. This is helping to provide users with a seamless and secure connectivity experience. Currently more than 200 tablets used by various ESSAR employees at the corporate headquarters and in other offices, are using the Cisco WiFi solution to get remote internet access.

Fig 2: Wireless LAN Controller Design:-



Business Results:

The implementation of the Cisco WiFi solution has helped the ESSAR provide seamless, ubiquitous and simplified access to the internet for both its employees and visiting guests, through a single infrastructure with all requisite security measures. The Cisco WLAN Setup has also provided ESSAR with ease of administration and comes with the enhanced value of improved end- user productivity. Being engaged with Cisco also helps ESSAR to add various top notch technological enhancements from time to time, which further leads to increased user satisfaction.

“Cisco's secure, seamless, wireless solution has enabled mobility to a great extent and has removed the barriers of wired connectivity for users at ESSAR, thus adding to customer satisfaction and increased productivity for our organization,” says Jayantha Prabhu, Chief Technology Officer , ESSAR Group. “We appreciate the efforts from Cisco and the partner organization Meridian InfoTech”, he adds. Agreeing with him, Keyur Desai, Delivery Head – Network and Communications, ESSAR Group says, “This has been a good implementation experience for us, which helped achieve the set expectations of seamless secured wireless access.”

The biggest value addition of the project has been mobility, and the company now hopes to extend project foot print across most of its group locations. Some of the tangible results obtained from the implementation include:

- Ease of administration improved by 80%
- End- user productivity increased by 60%
- User satisfaction increased by 70%
- Ease of access to top notch technology advancements improved by 80%

“Cisco's secure, seamless, wireless solution has enabled mobility to a great extent and has removed the barriers of wired connectivity for users at ESSAR, thus adding to customer satisfaction and increased productivity for our organization. We appreciate the efforts from Cisco and the partner organization Meridian InfoTech”.

- Jayantha Prabhu, Chief Technology Officer

PRODUCT LIST

- Cisco 5500 Series WLAN Controller for up to 100 Lightweight APs
- Cisco Aironet 1242 & 1252 AG 802.11ag LWAPP AP Integrated Antennas FCC Cnfg
- Cisco Secure Access control server - ACS
- WCS

Next Steps:

Currently the company has installed four Cisco WLAN controllers at its corporate offices and Plant Sites. Each of the WLANs has different user access levels for ESSAR employees, restricted

users, ESSAR guests and users of BlackBerry phones.

The biggest value addition in this project has been mobility and the company has now decided to extend the project foot print across most of its group locations.

For More Information:

To find out more about the Cisco solution visit: www.cisco.com

To find out more about Cisco Wireless solutions visit: www.cisco.com/go/wireless

To learn more about ESSAR group visit: www.essar.com



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