



2018

ANNUAL REPORT

Our Members



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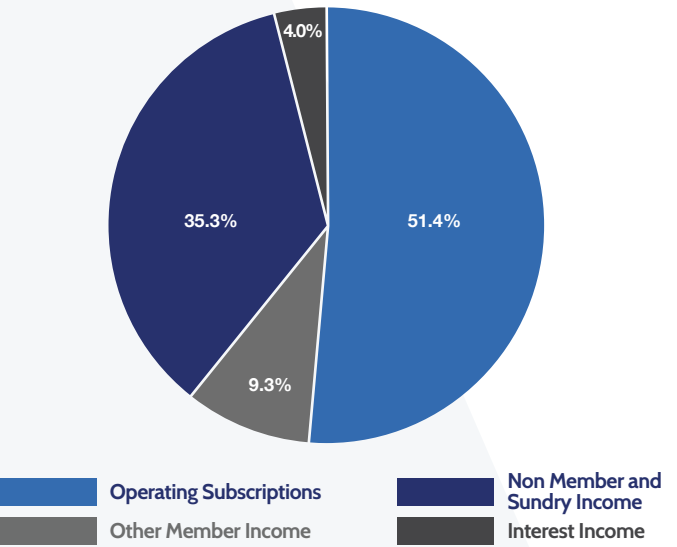
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From the Chair and CEO



It has been almost a decade since the construction of the Victorian Education and Research Network (VERN) was completed, and the company has progressed to share the benefits of the network with sectors of the Victorian community beyond tertiary education and research. The company's strategy of owning and operating its own optic fibre network provides the foundation for highly scalable services that benefit multiple organisations. In many regional towns VERNet provides services to universities, TAFEs, hospitals and schools on shared, high-capacity, resilient infrastructure, independent of the commercial market. This independence enables the company to offer cost-effective, high-bandwidth services where commercial carriers would find service delivery uneconomic.

For the year ending 31 December 2018 Operating Subscriptions from members made up only 51.4% of total revenue with TAFEs, hospitals and schools now making a significant contribution to the cost base of the company. This keeps member costs down while continuing to increase the capacity and reach of the network.



In 2018 VERNet secured contracts with a total value of \$4.6M with Melbourne Polytechnic. VERNet will provide a diverse 10Gbps network to seven TAFE locations for a period of 14 years. As the company has matured it has secured contracts for periods ranging from 5 years to 15 years, giving organisations long term access and the flexibility to upgrade their services when required. VERNet's ability to contract for periods in excess of a decade is a key differentiator in the market and has proved popular with several health and education customers.

The need for interoperability between health services in Victoria has also generated demand for VERNet's high-capacity network. The adoption of Electronic Health Records requires high-capacity resilient services, and VERNet's regional network enables hospitals and clinics to upgrade to gigabit connectivity using infrastructure designed to be scalable.

VERNet is a network designed by members and built for members.

Customer satisfaction is a high priority for the company and VERNet adopted the Net Promoter Score methodology in 2017. In 2018 the score rose from 66.7 to 87.5, and in order to reward members for their loyalty to the cooperative, VERNet offered a retention rebate of \$0.5M to be applied to 2019 Operating Subscriptions.

In 2018 we said farewell to Professor Jane den Hollander, Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University, on her retirement. She has been an invaluable member of the VERNet Board and we would like to thank her for the significant contribution that she has made to the company. Also in 2018 we welcomed Professor Helen Bartlett to the Board. Professor Bartlett is the Vice-Chancellor of Federation University Australia.

Thank you to the VERNet Board, Shareholders and staff for their tireless work in 2018. Our success is a result of the enthusiastic support and contribution from all members of the cooperative and their staff. VERNet is a network designed and built for members and we look forward to building our capabilities, reach and customer satisfaction in the future.

2018 Highlights



Our Products

VERNet’s products enable customers to establish highly reliable network connectivity across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Our services are underpinned by a carrier grade, resilient, low-latency fibre-based core network. Customers can connect sites and data centres, as well as provision connectivity to third party organisations.

VERNet offers scalable, flexible, high speed Wide Area Network (WAN) products that meet a wide range of site connectivity requirements.



Wide Area Network

Point-to-Point

- Layer 1 optical (xWDM, OTN)
- Up to 100 Gigabit Ethernet
- Low Latency
- Jumbo frame support
- Customer VLANs supported

Point-to-Multipoint

- Layer 2 or Layer 3 VPNs
- Up to 100 Gigabit Ethernet
- QoS, Multicast
- Jumbo frame support

Multipoint

- Layer 2 or Layer 3 VPNs
- Up to 100 Gigabit Ethernet
- QoS, Multicast
- Jumbo frame support



Data centre connect

Our carrier grade data centre products enable customers to connect to internal or external data centres. Customers can use these products for a wide range of site connectivity requirements including VPNs, Ethernet and Fibre Channel.

VERNet also offers colocation space in NEXTDC M1 & NEXTDC M2 data centres in Melbourne. We can provide spaces starting from a quarter rack, with a range of power ratings from 1kW, as well as onsite support if required.



Cloud connect

VERNet offers many network products that provide fast, secure connections between you, other organisations and service operators at a variety of speeds.

We provide a range of connectivity options to the following public cloud service providers: Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform, IBM Cloud, Oracle, Megaport and Amazon Web Services.

Vernet provides customers with high performance carrier grade internet. A wide range of service rates are available, with unlimited usage and no volume or time limitations applied. To suit a wide range of organisations with varying requirements and budgets, VERNet offers three Internet product tiers.



Internet

VERNet Wholesale

- Extensive coverage
- Bandwidth flexibility, scalability
- Local NOC, 24x7x365
- Full BGP table
- 1:1 contention rate
- SLA

VERNet Business Premium

- Extensive coverage
- Bandwidth flexibility, scalability
- Local NOC, 24x7x365
- Full BGP table or default route
- Competitive pricing
- SLA

VERNet Business Standard

- Extensive coverage
- Bandwidth flexibility, scalability
- Local NOC, 24x7x365
- Competitive pricing



Custom engineering

If you don’t have the resources to design your own WAN, realise your disaster recovery and storage requirements or configure and manage your own internet service; we can help. We will work with you to achieve your business requirements in a professional, efficient manner and provide ongoing access to Engineering, Account Management and NOC support for the life of your service.

CASE STUDY

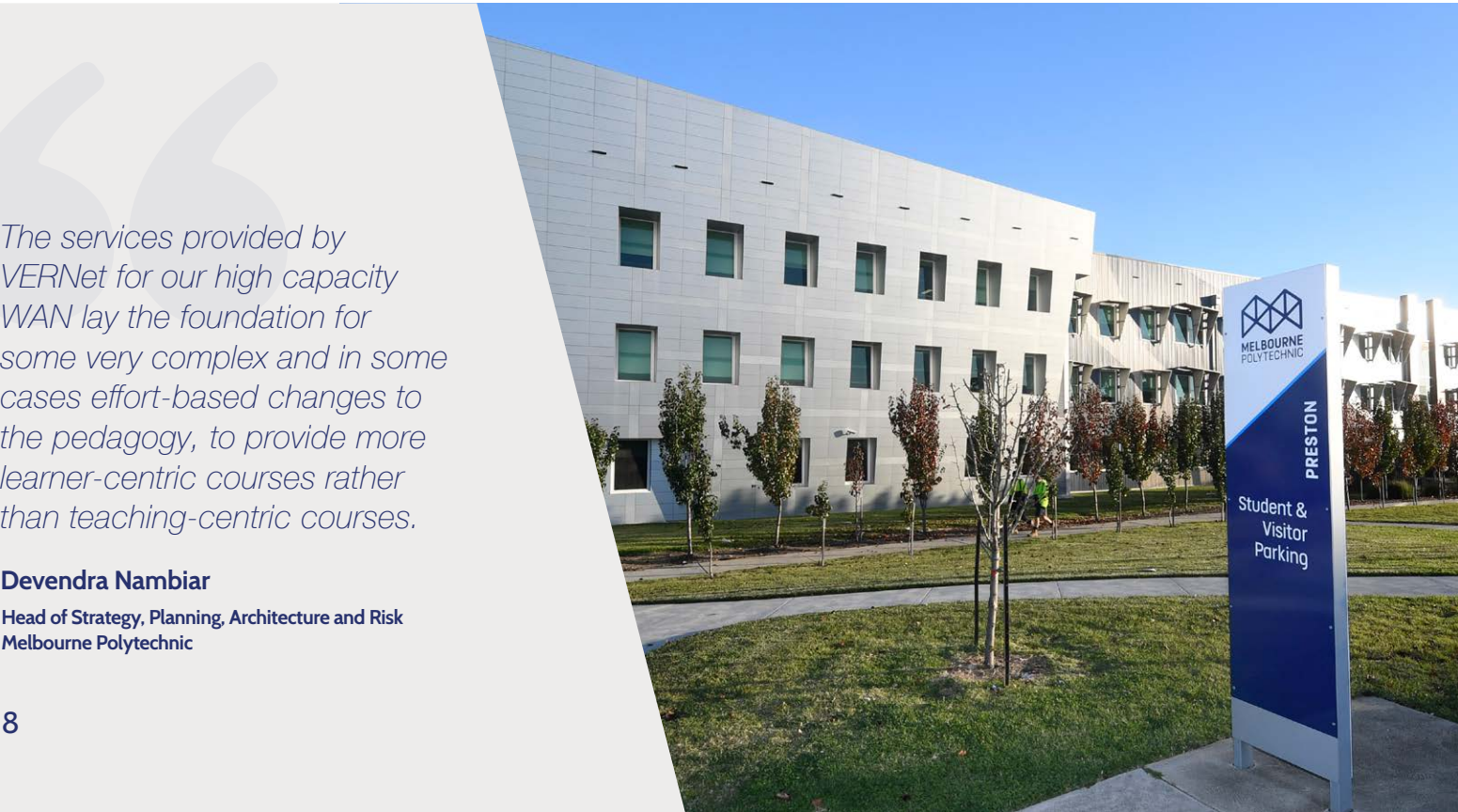
VERNet and Melbourne Polytechnic enter into a long-term partnership to provide a minimum of 10Gbps to seven campuses for 14 years

Recognised as one of the leading Vocational and Higher Education institutions in Australia, Melbourne Polytechnic has been a provider of hands-on, industry-linked education to Victorians for over 100 years. Priding itself on providing students with a contemporary learning environment, Melbourne Polytechnic produces highly skilled, work-ready graduates who are eager to make a difference. In 2018, the ITS Team commenced a network infrastructure overhaul that will take it to the next tier of IT capability.

With education delivery becoming increasingly reliant on network-based technologies, Melbourne Polytechnic’s modest network of sub-1Gbps services was limiting its ability to take full advantage of technological advancements within the sector. Changing teaching methods and cloud-based service offerings, combined with bandwidth-heavy technologies such as virtual reality, video content and collaboration applications; were driving increasing demand for bandwidth.

A robust new solution was needed – a high capacity, scalable network that will adapt to the evolving needs of its users over time.

Following a highly competitive tendering process, Melbourne Polytechnic selected VERNet to design and build a fully diverse Wide Area Network (WAN) connecting all seven of its campuses. With a fourteen-year service term, this crucial foundation will enable the ITS Team to provide uninterrupted, highly available services and leading-edge technologies to students and staff well into the future.



The services provided by VERNet for our high capacity WAN lay the foundation for some very complex and in some cases effort-based changes to the pedagogy, to provide more learner-centric courses rather than teaching-centric courses.

Devendra Nambiar
Head of Strategy, Planning, Architecture and Risk
Melbourne Polytechnic

Stage One	Stage Two	Interconnect Locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Greensborough CampusEpping CampusPrahran Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preston CampusCollingwood CampusHeidelberg CampusFairfield Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">NEXTDC M1 – Port MelbourneMetronode (Equinix) Walsh St, West Melbourne

? Challenges

- Capacity increase required to support future functions and applications
- Ageing infrastructure, over wide geographic spread
- Modest network capacity limited ability to provide resources to students

💡 Solution

- Design a fully diverse 10Gbps WAN across all campuses.

★ Benefits

- Futureproof
- Efficient roll-out of collaborative tools across student body
- Virtual learning environments

Challenges

The existing sub-1Gbps network was no longer sufficient to meet the evolving needs of users. A significant increase in capacity was required to support new applications, and to accommodate technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and machine learning effectively and without disruption.

The seven campuses are located over a very wide geographic area, with bandwidth coverage varying between locations. The ageing infrastructure needed upgrading in order to keep pace with emerging technologies and cater to increases in demand over time.

Limited network capacity was in some cases preventing Melbourne Polytechnic from providing valuable resources to students. For example, Microsoft Teams has been used by staff for some time but could not be provided to students on the current network. Insufficient capacity to host lab applications in the cloud limited students to onsite access.

Solution

VERNet custom designed a diverse 10Gbps WAN ring connecting all seven Melbourne Polytechnic campuses, made fully redundant using dual lead-ins at each site. VERNet also provides 10Gbps connectivity to cloud service providers at NEXTDC Melbourne Data Centre (M1) and Equinix Data Centre in West Melbourne; and internet services.

Benefits

Melbourne Polytechnic now has the foundation for a futureproof, agile network that the ITS Team can build out as new technologies and applications become available. The scalability will enable granular capacity increases to meet future demand in a cost-effective manner.

With the boosted network capacity, plans are in place to deploy Microsoft Teams across the student body; and to relocate approximately 245 lab applications to the cloud, enabling remote access through cloud-streaming. Lecture Capture is currently in the pilot phase, and once rolled out will enable students to view lectures anytime, anywhere.

The new network will also make virtual reality, X-Reality and artificial intelligence technologies much more accessible. Virtual learning environments are just one example of countless innovations setting Melbourne Polytechnic apart, cementing its position at the forefront of vocational education.

ABOUT MELBOURNE POLYTECHNIC: Melbourne Polytechnic has been delivering vocational training since 1912 and today offers a diverse range of innovative, hands-on TAFE (VET) and Higher Education (Degree) programs to equip students with the knowledge and skills to excel in an evolving and challenging marketplace.
www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au

CASE STUDY

High bandwidth cloud services to the not-for-profit community services sector

Uniting (Victoria and Tasmania) Limited, known as Uniting Vic.Tas, has been formed by integrating twenty-five entities into a single organisation. Since its creation in 2017, Uniting has partnered with VERNet to build a Wide Area Network (WAN) core which will ultimately interconnect 250 or more sites. Seamless, high speed connections into Microsoft Azure and Amazon Web Services enabled Uniting to deploy an enterprise platform in just four weeks, at scale, to support their 7000-strong workforce.

Across 250 offices and in excess of 500 residential units, Uniting Vic.Tas provides 770 programs and services that people rely on every day. Prior to the merger, these services were delivered over fifteen disparate networks, hindering Uniting’s precursor entities’ ability to service all sites equitably. VERNet’s cost effective, high bandwidth capacity allows Uniting to consolidate their services into the cloud, enabling them to address inequity of service across sites while also benefiting from significant economies of scale. Over the next three years Uniting will migrate in excess of 250 sites to the new network, ensuring the organisation’s future capability to undertake life-changing work in the rapidly transforming community services sector.



Our high-speed network enabled by VERNet allows ‘at desk’ provisioning of PCs and laptops for new starters. Along with Microsoft Autopilot and Intune, it has reduced a 10 hour process to 30 minutes. With almost 1000 machines per annum upgraded, managed or re-provisioned, this is a significant efficiency. It allows more time to be spent supporting staff in their critical work, deploying productivity tools, and further modernising our ICT platforms.

Chris Pivec
Chief Information Officer
Uniting Vic.Tas Ltd

Uniting Vic.Tas works across the full spectrum of community services, intervening early to help people avoid crisis, as well as supporting those who live life on the margins. Their key community services include:

- Aged and carer services
- Alcohol and other drug services
- Business and social enterprise
- Child, youth and family services
- Disability services
- Early learning services
- Employment services
- Mental health services
- Resilient communities services

Challenges

Ageing infrastructure within fifteen disparate networks created inequity of service between sites and significant issues with collaboration post-merger. With the sector shifting towards electronic platforms, Uniting needed to centralise services and adopt an enterprise delivery model. Twenty-five organisations with a total of 7,000 staff and volunteers needed to be integrated quickly and with minimal disruption.

With multiple active directories, email systems, telephone systems, corporate and client applications, the move to a centralised approach is not without its challenges. It is paramount that services are underpinned by a reliable high-performing core network supporting improvements to regional services.

Solution

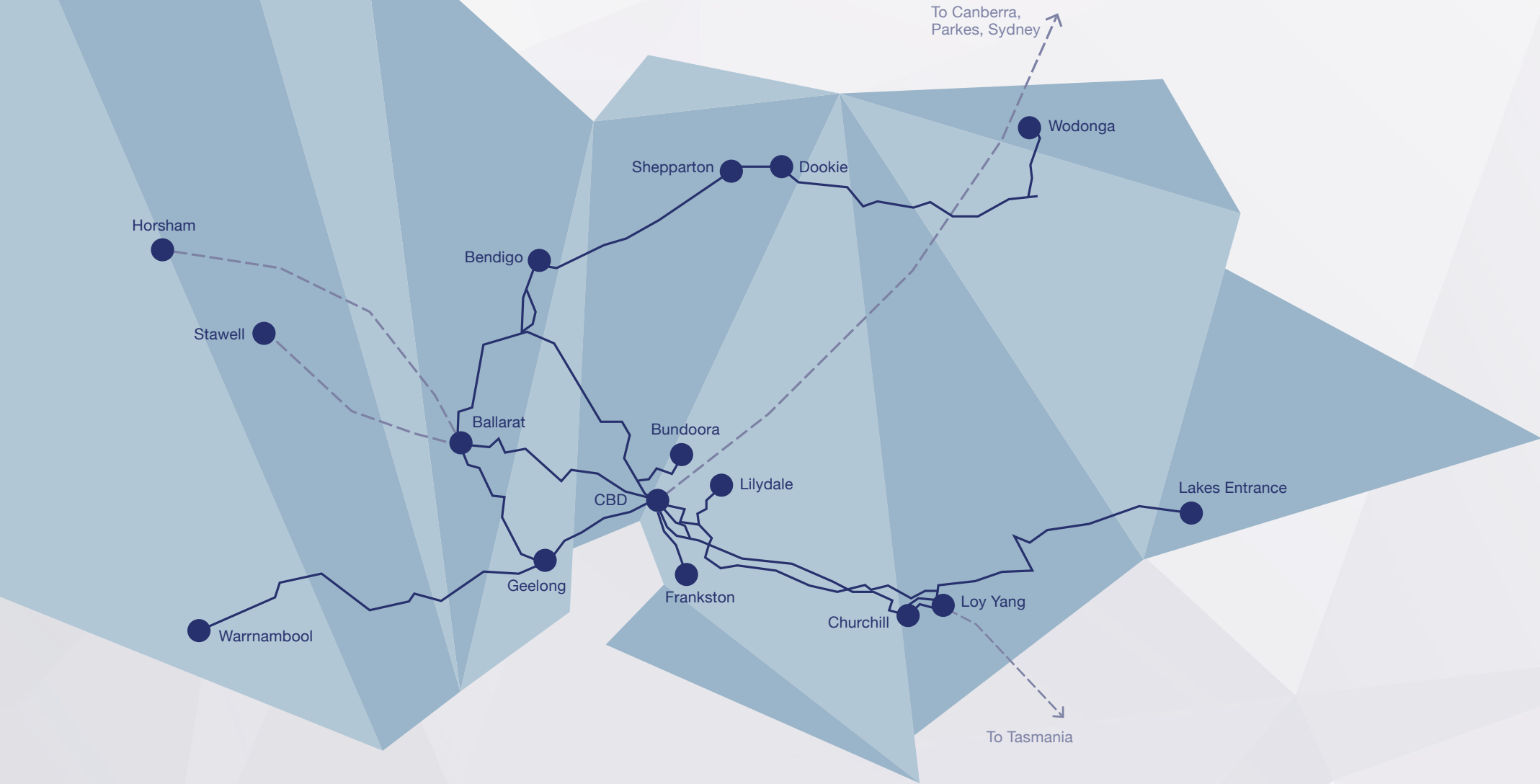
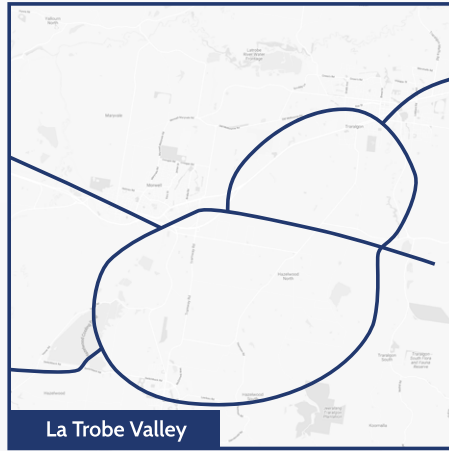
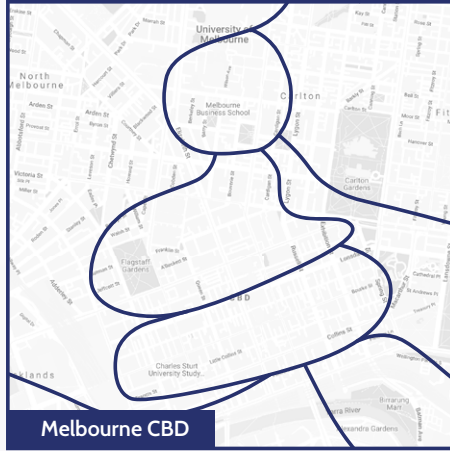
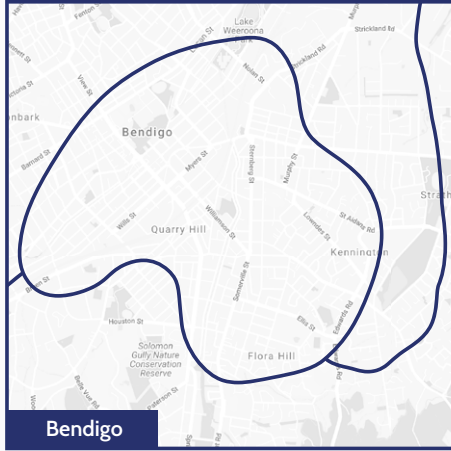
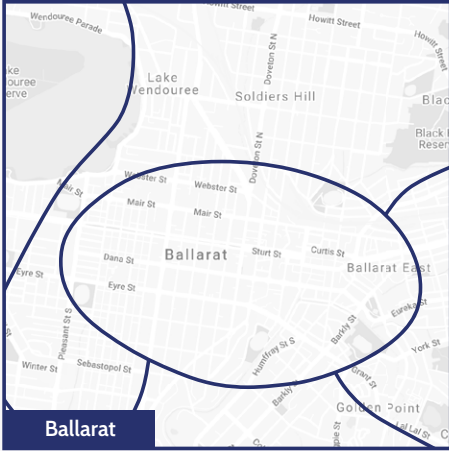
VERNet custom designed a Uniting Private Network (VPLS) core to interconnect Uniting corporate sites to provide access to high speed connections into the Internet, Microsoft Azure and Amazon Web Services.

Benefits

VERNet’s services have enabled Uniting to smoothly transition to an enterprise business platform. With operations centralised, economies of scale are driving significant savings that can now be reinvested in the provision of modern, sustainable ICT. Uniting has built a cloud service which will gradually replace the local services in all Uniting sites over the next three years. Once all sites are connected, the VERNet core network will support extensive use of video-conferencing, collaboration applications such as Microsoft Teams, and Office 365. Uniting is now significantly ahead of its peers and the industry in terms of both a complete Cloud-first adoption strategy and in maximising its utilisation of the Microsoft SaaS productivity stack.

ABOUT UNITING VIC.TAS: Uniting works alongside people of all ages in local communities across Victoria and Tasmania. Uniting’s services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania. See more information by visiting www.vt.uniting.org.

The Network



Education K-12

- Charles La Trobe College
- Haileybury
- Kurnai College
- Nossal High School
- Marcellin College



University Residence

- Trinity College



Community

- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters
Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)
- Uniting Vic Tas Ltd



TAFE

- Box Hill Institute
- Federation Training
- GOTAFE
- Melbourne Polytechnic



Research Facility

- Australian Genome Research Facility
- Centre for Eye Research Australia
- Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of
Medical Research



University

- Australian Catholic University
- Deakin University
- Federation University Australia
- La Trobe University
- Monash University
- RMIT University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- The University of Melbourne
- Victoria University



Health

- Gippsland Health Alliance
- Northern Health
- Murray City Country Coast GP
Training
- The Royal Melbourne Hospital
- Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital
- South West Alliance of Rural Health

CASE STUDY

Marcellin College upgrades technology to meet increasing demand for bandwidth

Marcellin College has successfully doubled its bandwidth through installing a 400Mbps VERNet service. ICT Manager, Remco Burgers, and Director of Community Engagement and Marketing, Ben Bugeja, share how the school is leveraging this new capacity to enrich the learning environment.

Marcellin College is a Catholic Marist boys' secondary school located in the leafy Melbourne suburb of Bulleen. Founded in 1950, the College has a rich history of academic excellence spanning almost 70 years. The decision to install a second internet service arose from a need for both diversity and increased bandwidth. Prior to engaging VERNet, the College relied on a single 400Mbps fibre service from Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM), with the needs of the school community rapidly changing. Remco explains, "Capacity requirements are always increasing. The school has recently moved to Microsoft Office 365, and a lot more of our services are being provided online. Our CEM link is a shared service and they can have outages like anybody else, which can affect the quality of service we're delivered. So the school chose to go down the path of getting a secondary connection to alleviate this."

To manage the fluctuating traffic of 1500 users, Remco's team has employed a load-balancing system. "We now have 800Mbps combined bandwidth between the two services, with the load balanced between the two. If one service goes down the other one takes over, and vice versa," Remco says. "Continuation of service is our main priority, so having the CEM link and the VERNet link makes that so much easier."

The microwave service has proved a reliable and economical solution. "To get another fibre connection would have been very costly, so the decision was made to go with the microwave link from VERNet," continues Remco. "It's obviously a much more economical option. We've had the link on a trial basis for six months now, with really good results. The team at VERNet have been very responsive to what we need."

The scalability of the service is particularly advantageous, enabling the school to not only increase bandwidth to meet growing requirements in the future, but also increase it temporarily to manage short-term usage spikes. "Our bandwidth requirements will vary hour to hour, minute to minute, depending on what the students are doing," Remco explains. "Some of their work is very intensive on the internet and some of it isn't as much, so it ebbs and flows. We can call VERNet and say, 'Hey guys, we've got some really heavy times coming up, turn up the pump.'"

With twice the previous bandwidth to play with, the College is introducing a Cloud First Policy. "Our preference is to have products that live in the cloud, it provides much easier access for everyone," Remco says. "It doesn't matter if our site goes down, people can still access it, or if parts of the internet go down, people can still access it. A lot of schools are moving towards this, it's a hybrid model - you have some of your services inhouse and others in the cloud, and you balance them."

The ICT team is currently hard at work on the upcoming roll-out of Schoolbox, a sophisticated Learning Management System (LMS). Schoolbox provides students with their own centralised portal, storing their study materials, assignments and academic records. After a twelve-month lead-in of extensive planning and staff training, followed by a successful trial, the team is now on track to implement the platform across the student body in 2019. Access will then be extended to parents and guardians later in the year, enabling them to view their child's academic progress and achievements in real time.

Schoolbox is set to transform the way education is delivered at Marcellin. As content accumulates over time, each account builds on itself year after year, becoming an increasingly valuable resource for both students and parents. As the platform is hosted both inhouse and in the cloud, users can access it from anywhere at any time, Remco explains. "It's all online, it's all available. The LMS becomes a repository of information," he says. "With the LMS, we can go back and see exactly what we did last year."

Do they anticipate any issues with increased traffic from Schoolbox? "It's fairly lightweight in terms of the way the students will be using the data on there," says Remco, "but it's 1500 students using it all at once, so we'll see what happens. We haven't had any issues so far, if we do we'll adjust our firewall and bandwidth accordingly."

Today's rapidly evolving tech landscape is opening up a world of possibilities for schools, and Marcellin College is exploring options through the lens of its core objective - to provide its community of staff and students with the highest quality learning experience possible. Ben explains, "We're looking at new tech and new applications, and we're evaluating how we're going to use them effectively." It's essential that new technology is introduced with minimal disruption to the learning environment. "You want it to be efficient right from implementation", Ben says.

"We don't just want to say, 'Here's some tech,'" adds Remco, "it's got to be about, 'How does this fit into the curriculum?'. For instance, could we utilise virtual reality to teach English or Maths in a VR environment? Or can we use this technology to connect to a class in another country in real time to do that lesson?"

With so many possibilities on the technological horizon, the future's looking bright at Marcellin College.

*The team at
VERNet have been
very responsive to
what we need.*

Remco Burgers
ICT Manager
Marcellin College

Our Milestones

VERNet incorporated

Funding	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Federal Gov (SII) Loy Yang	6.3				6.3
Federal Gov (SII) East Gippsland		3.0			3.0
Federal Gov (CDP)		0.5	2.5	2.4	5.4
Member Capital	4.3	4.1	5.8	5.8	20.0
Total (\$M)	10.6	7.6	8.3	8.2	34.7

152 Phase 1 services completed

100Gbps services launched

VERNet builds \$5M Victorian Research Network

33 hospitals and health providers connected

Mandate broadened to include hospitals, schools & TAFEs

South West Alliance of Rural Health and Gippsland Health Alliance connected to Health Shared Services

Uniting Vic.Tas WAN built

Members awarded \$0.5M rebate

2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

2009 2010 2011

2012 2013

2014 2015

2016 2017

2018

BUILD

OPERATE

Our Board



Professor Ian Young AO
Chair and Independent Director

*BE (Hons) James Cook. MEngSc
James Cook. PhD James Cook. FTSE,
HonFIEAust, CPEng*

Professor Ian Young AO was Vice-Chancellor of The Australian National University from 2011 to 2016 and Vice-Chancellor of Swinburne University of Technology from 2003 to 2011. In 2014 he was elected Chair of the Group of Eight (Go8) Board of Directors. His research interests are in Coastal and Ocean Engineering and Physical Oceanography. He has a distinguished academic career, having published extensively and received sustained competitive research funding. Consultancies include to the US Navy and the offshore oil and gas industry in Australia, Asia and North America. He has also been a Director of numerous companies. He presently holds the position of Kernot Professor of Engineering at the University of Melbourne.



Michelle Beveridge
Independent Director

*Executive MBA, BBus, CPA, GAICD,
FMACS (CP)*

An experienced C-level executive and board director of 15+ years, Michelle has developed her capabilities in industries including pharmaceuticals, logistics, financial services, higher education and travel. Initially pursuing a career in accounting and later in Information Technology, Michelle has leveraged these combined skills to facilitate significant business transformation and growth programs. Currently Chief Operating Officer of Intrepid Group, Michelle is also an Independent Director of REI Superannuation Fund Pty Ltd.

Michelle is a Fellow and Certified Professional of the Australian Computer Society, a Certified Practicing Accountant, a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and of the Australian Graduate School of Management MBA (Exec).



Doctor Bronte Adams AM
Independent Director

*D.Phil (Oxon), Executive MBA (McKinsey &
Co), BA (Hons, UWA), GAICD, IPAA Fellow*

Dr Bronte Adams is a Rhodes Scholar, former McKinsey & Co consultant, senior government executive, board Director and the founder of a successful consulting business. She has particular expertise in technology and telecommunications, infrastructure and procurement. Bronte has chaired and sat on numerous public and private sector entity boards, covering the fields of science, technology and innovation, broadband, education and health. Current board appointments include:

- Rhodes Trust Australia
- Innovation and Science Australia
- Australian National Commission for UNESCO

Bronte is also currently a member of the AICD Technology Governance and Innovation Panel. She has led and managed public sector policy development and implementation and has advised a wide range of clients in the innovation, health, technology, science & research, startup, cultural and education sectors.



Professor Helen Bartlett
Vice-Chancellor and President,
Federation University Australia

*BA (Northumbria University), Master
of Science (Public Policy) and a PhD
(University of Bath)*

Professor Helen Bartlett commenced her role as Vice-Chancellor and President of Federation University Australia on 1 May 2017. She has worked in Higher Education for more than 30 years, holding senior leadership roles across different organisational levels in a range of universities in the UK, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Australia.

Previously, Professor Bartlett was Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Monash University Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, a leading transnational joint venture. Prior to this, Professor Bartlett was Pro Vice-Chancellor and President of Monash's Gippsland Campus.

Professor Bartlett has an international research record in gerontology, and has extensive experience of working in partnership with government and industry to undertake policy relevant research.

In her current role she is leading the transformation of Federation University Australia to become national and internationally recognised for its innovative approach to regional vocational and higher education that changes lives and enhances communities.



Peter Marshall
Chief Operating Officer &
Senior Vice President, Monash
University

*Bachelor of Economics Monash,
Chartered Member Australian Human
Resources Institute, Previous Chair Group
of Eight Universities' Human Resource
Directors' group*

Responsible for Buildings & Property, Human Resources, e-Solutions, Campus Community, University General Counsel, and Monash Retail. He also manages the University's relationships with many external organisations. Peter's career has included roles in Federal and State Government public service, including senior HR and financial management positions in Victorian Government departments.

Peter joined Monash in 1995 as Director of Personnel Services and was appointed Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President in August 2005.



Professor Richard Constantine
Vice-President: Engagement &
Resources, Victoria University

PDM (Melb), MBA (Monash)

Professor Richard Constantine is a senior executive with over 30 years' experience in the higher education sector. Richard has responsibility over the Built Campus Environment, Campus Master Planning and associated Facilities Services as well as ICT. He is also responsible for the Engagement function, which includes Alumni and Government Relations.

Richard is committed to the pursuit of excellence which has been recognised by colleagues in the ICT industry, most notably when he was awarded CIO of the year in 2014.

Professor Constantine is a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society.



Paul Campbell

Deputy Chief Operating Officer,
Australian Catholic University
(ACU)

*Master Business and Technology (UNSW),
and Australian Institute Company
Director Graduate Diploma (GAICD)*

In his current role as Deputy Chief Operating Officer at Australian Catholic University (ACU), Paul is responsible for capital planning and strategic infrastructure projects. Previous ACU roles include Director Information Technology and Director Properties and Facilities. Prior to ACU, Paul held ICT leadership roles with Clayton Utz, Commonwealth Bank, Zurich Australia and Deloitte.

He is currently on the board of CAVAL Limited (2014) and a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. He previously held a position on the board of AARNet Pty Ltd (2011-2012), and was Chair of the AARNet Advisory Committee.

Paul holds a Master of Business and Technology (UNSW), and an Australian Institute of Company Directors Graduate Diploma (GAICD).



Byron Collins

Executive Director Infrastructure
Services & Chief Technology
Officer, The University of
Melbourne

*Master of Business Administration from
the Melbourne Business School and a
Bachelor of Science from the University
of Melbourne*

Byron joined the University of Melbourne in 2014 as Executive Director Infrastructure Services. As ED Infrastructure Services, Mr Collins leads the teams responsible for delivery of Information Technology and Facilities services.

Prior to joining the University, Mr Collins had an extensive career in consulting and corporate leadership roles, including responsibility for a variety of shared services. His leadership career includes stints at IBM, SMS Consulting and AWB Limited, notably Chief Information Officer and General Manager Shared Services.

Our Staff



Marianne Cottle
Commercial Manager

Marianne brings 16 years' industry experience to her role as Commercial Manager. Originally joining VERNet in 2007, she spent six years in the role of Client Liaison Manager, managing all aspects of member engagement. Marianne returned to VERNet in early 2017 to take on the role of Commercial Manager, retaining a primary focus on member engagement while expanding her responsibilities to include contracting, product and service offerings, as well as marketing activities.

"It's a pleasure to be back working with the dedicated team at VERNet whose focus and priority is always our customers and the quality of service provided to them."



Jackie Hill
Finance & Administration Manager

Jackie has managed the finances of VERNet since 2006; she brings extensive experience from working at both Chartered Accounting firms and private IT companies. Jackie is responsible for all areas of finance at VERNet ranging from salary packaging and payroll, budgeting, financial reporting, audit, pricing, compliance with Statutory, taxation and regulatory requirements as well as working closely with the CEO and providing support to the commercial and engineering teams.

Jackie is a Member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and is a Registered Tax Agent.



Susan Hadley
Office Administrator

Susan joined VERNet in 2016. As Office Administrator, she is responsible for the day-to-day running of the office, as well as providing administrative support to the CEO and the Finance & Administration Manager. She brings with her over 15 years' experience in corporate administration, having worked as an administrative contractor for a wide range of clients before joining VERNet.



Cameron McDonnell
Service Delivery Manager

Cameron has been with VERNet since 2007. He took on his current role of Service Delivery Manager in 2017, after two years as a Project Manager. Cameron is involved in new projects from conceptualisation, right through to the implementation and commissioning of services. As part of his role he draws on his technical background as a telecommunications engineer and his knowledge of the VERNet infrastructure to contribute to pre-sales activities, this includes identifying opportunities and engineering solutions to meet customer's needs.

"In one way or another I have been involved in the roll-out of just about all of VERNet's physical infrastructure and the commissioning of most services. This knowledge of the network is very beneficial when dealing with customers, and helps identify opportunities to maximise the network's capabilities."



Puatai Sim
Asset Management System Analyst

Puatai has been with VERNet since early 2006. Her extensive background in data information systems comes from her years of experience at Monash University. She has been managing VERNet's Geographic Information System (GIS) since its inception as a carrier grade system designed to collect, store, manage and analyse all types of data relating to VERNet's fibre and equipment infrastructure assets.

"While the engineers are working on a design or are planning the network, I advise on the location of our infrastructure and help determine the feasibility of what can be built. Ultimately, I have to determine if a project will physically work and then map the network."



Robyn Hollingworth
Senior Network Specialist

Robyn manages the design and installation of the Layers 0-1 of the VERN (Transmission) and has involvement in the planning of Layers 2 and above in the VRN (MPLS network). Robyn has worked in the Telco industry for the past 17 years and previous to that, 25 years in IT and Telecommunications in the University sector.



James Morgan
Technical Manager

James joined VERNet in 2007 and manages many of our service delivery functions as well as the overall architecture and operation of our Layer 2 and 3 network. Having a broad range of skills and experience it's not uncommon to find him contributing to a wide variety of projects outside of his core responsibilities.

"We are seeing nothing but growth in my area of the business as more customers are looking to add direct connections to cloud providers and data centres, as well as augmenting their own networks with our metro Ethernet solutions. The flexibility in the initial design of our network has allowed me plenty of room to generate very specific and feature-rich designs for customers to meet demand."



Brandon Perry
Project Coordinator

Brandon joined VERNet in February 2016 as a Network Operator in our Network Operations Centre. He took on his current role of Project Coordinator in 2018, after two years as a Network Operator. Brandon assists with projects from the design stage to the final commissioning of services.

"I was extremely excited to have the opportunity to join VERNet. After spending two years in our Network Operations Centre learning the network and company from the ground up I have now moved into a new role assisting with projects for our customers. The skills and knowledge I have previously learned in our Network Operations Centre as well as what I am currently learning with our Projects team will put VERNet and myself in a great position to meet and exceed the needs of our customers moving forward!"

Our Staff



Robert McKendrick
Network Engineer

Robert joined VERNet in 2016 and is a part of the Network Operations Centre, where he works in a team to manage and troubleshoot our expansive network. His great enthusiasm and solid set of skills have already seen him collaborate on a number of additional projects such as our customer service portal, and our expanded network monitoring systems.

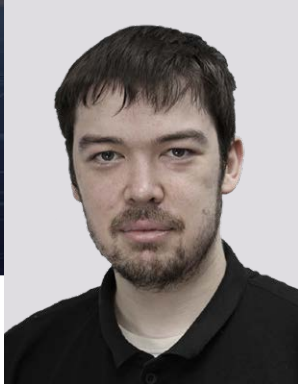
“It is exciting to be a member of the Network Operations team at VERNet. Monitoring systems and successfully troubleshooting problems is a satisfying experience. I look forward to seeing what we can continue to accomplish with the team.”



Daniel Szalinski
Technical Coordinator

Daniel joined VERNet in 2017 as a Technical Coordinator, where he assists both the Network Operations and Engineering teams.

“I relish the diversity in tasks my role offers; one day I might be in the Network Operations Centre monitoring the network and assisting customers, and the next I could be in regional Victoria commissioning a new network node. It’s a wonderful way to experience so many of the different facets of the industry.”



Nicholas Frizzel
Network Operator

“I joined VERNet early in 2016 with a university education in IT and System Administration, and I am thrilled to be able to join a team of such diverse talents and backgrounds at the start of my IT career. Overseeing such a vast and complex network has given me the opportunity to jump in feet-first, and I look forward to expanding my knowledge over the coming months and years.”



Mitchell Blair
Network Operator

Mitchell recently joined VERNet after completing a degree in Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering at Monash University. With recent experience at Telstra, Mitchell joins the Network Operations team with a great interest in the telecommunications industry. Mitchell’s diverse background and experience will place him well within the Network Operations Centre to manage VERNet’s vast network and contribute to various projects.

Culture and Values



Respect
Having regard for others



Fairness
Equitable and unbiased



Dialogue
An exchange of thought and discussion towards a solution



Delivering the goods
Committing to an agreed outcome



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