

Connectix
C A B L I N G S Y S T E M S

Case Study

The University of Kent

Location

Canterbury, United Kingdom



Introduction

The University of Kent at Canterbury obtained possession of a state of the art computer centre featuring a 200 square metre computer room and communications entrance facility.

The density of the racks and communications cabinets, plus the short time-scale, meant that only a pre-terminated cabling solution could meet the requirements of the data centre interconnection plan. This Tier 2 data centre packed in 48 server racks and 10 communications racks, plus an entrance facility housing another five communications racks in just a 200 square metre footprint. The sheer density of cabling this produced meant that only a pre-terminated cabling solution could meet the needs of the Category 6 and optical fibre links specified.

The Requirement

The University and their subcontractors needed a top quality solution that could be delivered in a timescale of just a few weeks, at the most competitive price. Connectix supplied over 3000 Category 6 preterminated cabling links also featuring a low flammability, zero halogen cable for higher fire protection.

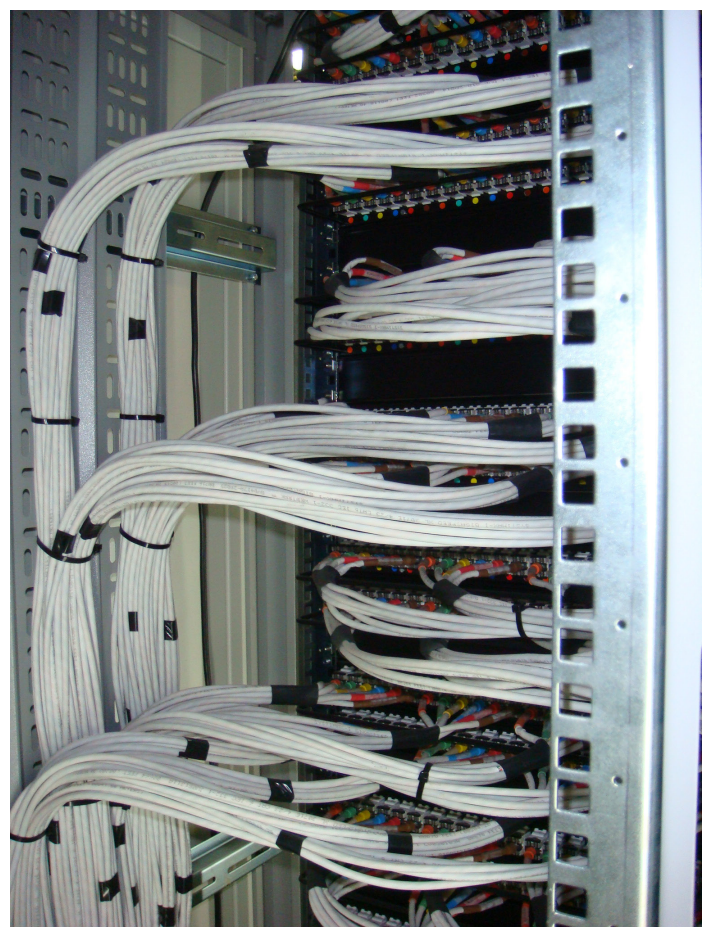
Several hundred OM3 and singlemode fibre links were also needed to connect the high speed data services and Storage Area Network requirements of the University. According to the results of the 2007 National Student Survey, Kent is the number one university in London and the south-east for student satisfaction. The computer room was built at the same time as the rest of the University, in the mid 1960s, and was modified in a piecemeal manner from the 1970s onwards. The facility hosts all the computing requirements of the University for both internal administration and academic research.

The location also acts as a central hub for an academic Wide Area Network where the University is the local East Kent hub for this national network. In 2007 the University of Kent Computing Laboratory's UK Mirror Service has had its busiest month since the service started over a decade ago, transferring over 154 Terabytes (169.4 million million bytes) of outbound traffic during October. This amount of traffic is equivalent to over two hundred thousand CDs filled with data or five CDs per minute and was mainly due to users downloading new releases of the popular Linux operating systems: openSUSE and Ubuntu.



Project Breakdown	
Client	The University of Kent
Location	Canterbury
Market Sector	Education
Installation Type	Category 6 and Optical Fibre

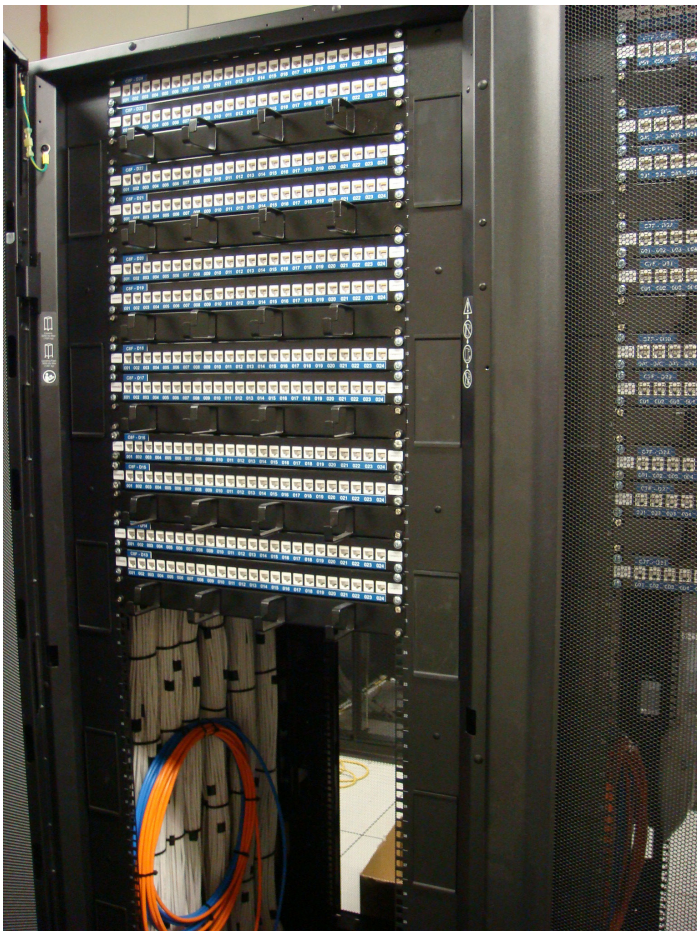
At its busiest point, the service handled approximately 7,500 concurrent downloads with a peak flow rate of 935 Mbits/s. The 16,000 students are located at the University's main 300 acre campus overlooking Canterbury plus the outlying facilities at Medway and Tonbridge. The Medway School of Pharmacy was opened in 2004 and is a joint school with the University of Greenwich on the Pembroke campus in Chatham. In addition, The University of Kent at Tonbridge offers parttime provision in west Kent, and The University of Kent at Brussels offers postgraduate law, politics and international relations degrees.



This modern Tier 2 data centre was designed by specialist M&E engineers Capitoline LLP and the installation was project managed by Future-Tech Ltd. BIC Cabling carried out the cable installation.

Connectix supply a unique service of measuring up cable routes for pre-terminated cabling systems and even arrange for the delivery of the items and collection of empty packaging and cable drums. Connectix tests 100% of the cable links before the items leave the factory and issue a 25-year warranty to the end-user client. The cable contractor re-tested a further sample of 10% of the links on site to demonstrate to the client the final installed capability.

The Connectix Express pre-terminated cabling system from Connectix also supplies rack mounted 24-way patch panels for the copper cabling and fibre termination panels for the optical links. The University opted for a mixture of the latest LC and SC connectors for their optical links.



The new computer room is based on the hot aisle/cold aisle principal and can handle IT equipment generating up to 200kW by virtue of six large Stulz air conditioning systems, a battery backed UPS system and a 630kVA standby generator. This level of power supply and cooling equates to over 500 average sized servers.

All the cabling was installed in the underfloor void where the pre-terminated cable bundles made light work of the tight installation timescales and requirements not to impede the cooling airflow needed by the dense computing environment. A full labelling and documentation scheme means that cabling will remain a useful asset for many years in the future and its high density and home run layout also means that few if any changes will be needed over the next ten years. To ensure that no messy patch cables end up festooned across the computer room floor, each server rack was equipped with a 48-way Category 6 copper cable link going back to the main communications row and each server row had every third cabinet also connected back to the communications row via an OM3 and singlemode cable. To ensure multimode and singlemode connections were never confused, the OM3 fibre was terminated with LC connectors whereas the OS1 fibre was terminated with SC connectors.

The communications row was in turn connected back to the telecommunications entrance room (TER) by hundreds of Cat 6 cables and more OM3 and singlemode optical fibre. The TER terminates cables from both BT and Verizon plus all the campus cabling owned by the University. This includes not only the cabling for the data and telephony system but also the 'campus-watch' security, CCTV and building management systems.

The data centre had an extra innovation of a separate BMS Cat 6 cabling system providing a 48-way Cat 6 cable link around the whole facility with quad outlets every two metres. This meant that there was dedicated cable system for all the IP cameras, security alarms and BMS links from air conditioning, UPS and power systems.

