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Ronald  
McDonald  
House®  
SOUTH EAST  
QUEENSLAND

Case study

Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland | Australia | Non-profit | Digital infrastructure

## Keeping families connected at Ronald McDonald House

### At a glance

#### Which services?

- Professional Services
- Procurement and logistics
- Uptime Maintenance

#### Which technologies?

- Cisco (switching, wireless, security, firewalls, telephones, Unified Communications)
- Pro AV (Televisions, projectors)

‘Technology is so important to what we do because it allows us to operate efficiently, to provide families with entertainment and a connection to their loved ones back home, and also to create a home away from home.’

*Christopher Macaulay, CEO, Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland*

#### Why technology provides an important ‘home away from home’ for families?

The charity built a new 13-storey building and wanted families to have the ability to stay in touch with loved ones, as well as with the hospital 24/7. This would bring peace of mind and give them a better experience during their stay.

[Read more](#)

#### How a wireless network creates a better experience for families?

The building is now fitted with a secure wired and wireless network that provides connectivity throughout the building. Families, staff and volunteers can securely connect to the Internet using their own devices.

[Read more](#)

#### What peace of mind ‘always-on’ connectivity means for distressed parents?

Parents need to be closely connected to the hospital. The network enables families to receive news 24/7, and to react to news if needed. Moreover, technology provides families with much-needed entertainment while they tend to their sick children in the hospital.

[Read more](#)



## ‘We were absolutely relieved to feel that something we knew very little about was taken on by experts with a heart.’

*Christopher Macaulay, CEO, Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland*

### Why technology provides an important ‘home away from home’ for families?

*The charity built a new 13-storey building and wanted families to have the ability to stay in touch with loved ones, as well as with the hospital 24/7. This would bring peace of mind and give them a better experience during their stay.*

Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland (RMH SEQ) provides accommodation for seriously ill children and their families who live more than 50 kilometres from a treating hospital in Brisbane or on the Gold Coast. The charity aims to preserve the family unit in the midst of emotional and financial stress.

With the amalgamation of the Children’s Hospital in Queensland and demand for RMH SEQ services, the government donated land towards the charity.

This prompted the construction of the South Brisbane House, a new high-rise building to provide housing for an additional 70 families. With further funding, the organisation is able to fit-out three additional shelled floors to support more families.

The charity relies heavily on donations to sustain their operations. They required significant support with the ICT component of the new building. The budget for technology was made up of the funds that were raised as part of the overall Capital Campaign.

### How a wireless network creates a better experience for families?

*The building is now fitted with a secure wired and wireless network that provides connectivity throughout the building. Families, staff and volunteers can securely connect to the Internet using their own devices.*

Dimension Data worked with the charity to help them understand how technology aligns with their vision of creating a better experience for families during their stay. The Dimension Data team then helped the charity through the process and managed the entire project outcome for them.

Dimension Data provided discounted design and consulting services for the video, telephony, networking, wireless and security for the building. The team also negotiated discounts from vendors and donated their time over a weekend to install racking, stacking and fit-out of the infrastructure – all to keep costs down for the charity.

Dimension Data is now also providing three-year Uptime Maintenance services to the charity. They don’t have to be concerned about managing the networking infrastructure, but can focus on ensuring that families are comfortable and cared for during their stay.

### What peace of mind ‘always-on’ connectivity means for distressed parents?

*Parents need to be closely connected to the hospital. The network enables families to receive news 24/7, and to react to news if needed. Moreover, technology provides families with much-needed entertainment while they tend to their sick children in the hospital. Improved service delivery, because civil servants work more productively.*

The charity now fulfils their vision to provide a ‘home away from home’ for families. The underlying networking infrastructure is the foundation for other services providing entertainment to families. All the rooms and communal spaces are fitted with televisions.

A meeting room on the top floor is fitted with a projector, which is used for Board meetings and for networking functions. There are also children’s play areas, which parents can watch from digital screens in the kitchens while they prepare food.

IP Telephony handsets on every floor provide connectivity and the reception is open 24/7 and gets messages to families immediately. The infrastructure also provides connectivity for a security access card system throughout the building.

Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland can use the infrastructure as a blueprint to extend it to other Houses to provide the same experience for other families.

### Technology accelerates digital business

‘Infrastructure is such an important part of the work we do – it allows us to stay connected with all our stakeholders whilst offering a range of support facilities for our families who are coping with the challenging circumstances they are facing as they care for their seriously ill children,’ says Christopher Macaulay, CEO, Ronald McDonald House South East Queensland.