

DrayTek**SMS VIP***Study
Connect
Thrive*

High-Speed Internet for Modern Student Living

DrayTek Routers | Access Points | Switching | VigorACS

Proven Infrastructure for Multi-Site Accommodation

Client:

Burt Brothers / The Merchant
Collection, Nottingham

Industry:

Property, student accommodation
and serviced accommodation

Partner:

SMS VIP, United Kingdom

About the company:

SMS VIP is an IT consultancy
specialising in networking and
managed infrastructure for
businesses and property
operators that need reliable
connectivity across multiple
buildings.

Founded by Philip Closier, a
DrayTek user for more than 15
years, SMS VIP provides a full end-
to-end service: network design,
sourcing, installation,
configuration, ongoing
management and first-line
support.

Products:**Routers**

Vigor 3910, Vigor 3912, Vigor
2927, LAX 5G

Switches

VigorSwitch P2540, 2280, 2282,
P2100, FX2120 (fibre)

Access Points

VigorAP 903, VigorAP 905

Central Management

VigorACS

The Overview

Burt Brothers' property portfolio includes student accommodation and serviced accommodation projects across multiple sites. As the business expanded, it required a reliable network infrastructure model that could be repeated across buildings while supporting high levels of connectivity demand from residents.

For student accommodation, internet connectivity is no longer a basic amenity. Residents rely on stable, high-speed connections for study, work, streaming, gaming, and day-to-day communication. Philip Closier noted that students are among the most demanding users and expect a strong, reliable connection at all times.

SMS VIP therefore developed a standardised DrayTek-based model that could support multiple buildings, provide strong in-room connectivity and be managed remotely. The approach combines DrayTek routers, switches, access points, fibre connectivity and VigorACS remote management to support reliable service across the estate.

The Requirement

Burt Brothers required a dependable infrastructure solution that could support high-density accommodation environments across multiple sites. The network needed to provide strong connectivity for residents while remaining manageable for SMS VIP as the support partner.

- Reliable high-speed internet connectivity across multiple buildings and rooms
- One access point per room or apartment where required, rather than relying on corridor-based Wi-Fi
- Remote monitoring and support, as around 90% of SMS VIP's work is handled remotely
- A standardised equipment model that could be repeated across new buildings and future projects
- Resilience and recoverability, allowing SMS VIP to respond quickly when users reported issues
- A practical, cost-effective alternative to solutions with high ongoing licensing costs

Your Reliable Networking Solutions Partner

The Solution

SMS VIP deployed a DrayTek-based infrastructure model across Burt Brothers' accommodation sites, using DrayTek routers, switches, access points and central management tools to deliver reliable internet access throughout the buildings. Philip Closier described using DrayTek Vigor 3910 and 3912 routers, 2927 routers, LAX 5G routers, P2540 switches, 2280 and 2282 switches, AP903 and AP905 access points, P2100 switches and FX2120 fibre switches across different deployments.

A key part of the design was to provide strong in-room connectivity. SMS VIP installs access points in individual rooms or apartments and uses VLAN tagging to give each room or apartment its own individual Wi-Fi environment.

The network was designed to be managed remotely wherever possible. VigorACS plays an important role in SMS VIP's support process, allowing the team to check connectivity, review ports, diagnose issues and apply temporary fixes without always needing to visit the site.

The infrastructure also supports high-throughput environments. At the Felix Building in Nottingham, 69 DrayTek AP903 access points support 68 rooms and a study area, alongside two P2540 switches and fibre links between floors. The site handles approximately 20 TB of data every 30 days, demonstrating the level of connectivity demand the infrastructure is designed to support.

SMS VIP also uses a standardised deployment model across buildings. Even in smaller buildings, the team often selects higher-capacity DrayTek hardware to maintain consistency, simplify support and make future deployments easier to manage.

"Familiarity in this case breeds confidence. I normally have the router, switches and access points configured before we get to site, so once the VLAN tagging is done, it is almost plug and play. Everything works together seamlessly, and if I ever need support, I know I can pick up the phone and speak to someone who can help," stated **Philip Closier, SMS VIP**.

The Conclusion

The DrayTek-based solution has enabled SMS VIP to deliver reliable, high-speed connectivity across Burt Brothers' accommodation portfolio. Residents benefit from strong internet access in their rooms, while the property operator can promote high-speed connectivity as part of the accommodation experience.

According to Philip Closier, residents regularly give positive feedback on the quality of the Wi-Fi, including comments that it is the best Wi-Fi they have experienced.

For SMS VIP, the DrayTek ecosystem has also improved day-to-day management. Remote access through VigorACS, the ability to monitor devices and the flexibility to apply workarounds remotely all help reduce the need for on-site troubleshooting.

The model is also scalable. Philip Closier explained that the existing model and use of VigorACS would allow SMS VIP to take on additional accommodation units without fundamentally changing the approach.

Why DrayTek?

- **Integrated product range:** SMS VIP uses DrayTek routers, switches and access points together as part of a complete infrastructure model.
- **Remote manageability:** VigorACS is central to SMS VIP's ability to support buildings remotely and respond to connectivity issues quickly.
- **Recoverability:** DrayTek's management features allow SMS VIP to create workarounds and restore user connectivity while arranging a permanent fix.
- **Standardisation:** Using a repeatable DrayTek model across buildings simplifies deployment and support.
- **Support relationship:** Philip Closier highlighted the ability to speak directly with DrayTek contacts and build trusted relationships with the technical team.
- **Cost-effective alternative:** Philip selected DrayTek after considering alternatives and wanting to avoid high licence-fee models for small business environments.

MSP Benefits

For SMS VIP, the DrayTek solution provides a practical and repeatable model for supporting multi-site accommodation environments. The ability to pre-configure equipment before arriving on site makes deployments more efficient and helps reduce time spent configuring devices in live environments.

The solution also supports a strong managed-service approach. SMS VIP remains responsible for running the infrastructure after installation, acting as the first point of contact for end users and managing the whole environment on behalf of the client.

Remote management is particularly valuable because SMS VIP supports sites from a distance. Philip Closier explained that around 90% of the work is remote, making VigorACS important for diagnosing and resolving issues quickly.

The use of spare equipment and a consistent DrayTek model also helps SMS VIP provide fast swap-outs and maintain continuity for the client. Philip explained that holding stock allows the team to respond quickly when replacement equipment is needed.

Deployment

SMS VIP typically prepares and configures the DrayTek equipment before attending site. Routers, switches and access points can be staged in advance, with VLAN tagging and room-specific Wi-Fi configurations prepared so that installation becomes much closer to a plug-and-play process.

The deployment model is designed around in-room connectivity rather than corridor-based Wi-Fi. SMS VIP uses access points in rooms or apartments and enables individual Wi-Fi environments through VLAN tagging.

In larger buildings, SMS VIP uses fibre links between floors and DrayTek switching infrastructure to support high-speed distribution throughout the property. One cited deployment included 68 rooms plus a study area, 69 AP903 access points, two P2540 switches and fibre between floors.

SMS VIP also uses DrayTek management tools to support ongoing operation after deployment. VigorACS allows the team to inspect ports, check device status and assist users remotely when issues arise.

Challenges

The main deployment challenges were not caused by the DrayTek equipment itself, but by the realities of working in new-build and refurbished accommodation environments. Philip Closier explained that many of these buildings are not "laboratory standard" environments and require highly reliable equipment.

Cabling quality was a recurring challenge. SMS VIP encountered faulty or badly terminated cables, including examples where cables were incorrectly punched down, twisted, missed out or damaged during installation.

Remote recoverability was also important where physical access was difficult or time-consuming. Philip described using VigorACS and VPN access to diagnose problems, find nearby access points and apply temporary connectivity workarounds until a permanent fix could be made.

Another challenge was maintaining infrastructure across multiple buildings and planning for equipment lifecycle management. SMS VIP now considers periodic swap-outs, servicing and holding spare equipment as part of the operational model.

DrayTek Corp. was established in 1997 with a mission to design and build premium networking products to help business make their most of the online connectivity. DrayTek's product lines range from enterprise-level firewall Security, VPN facilities for teleworking and branch-linking, versatile xDSL CPE, Switching, Voice-over-IP and wireless solutions:

- Complete range of WAN Security/Routing products
- Headquarters, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC
- Specialising in innovative networking products Worldwide Distribution and offices
- Listed on Taiwanese Stock Exchange 2004
- 180 employees worldwide, 45% R&D
- ISO 9001 Certified

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