FARMLANDS CO-OPERATIVE

Farmlands co-operative

Client	Project	What we did
Farmlands Co-operative	Aruba Wi-Fi	Wi-Fi Infrastructure Upgrade

Background

Farmlands Co-operative is the largest farmer-owned rural supplies co-operative in New Zealand, with annual business transactions of 2.5 billion dollars. Their staff work across more than 80 stores around the country, providing quality products and advice to farmers and growers.

Working within a highly competitive environment, Farmlands decided to kick off a digitisation initiative with a goal to leverage modern technology to gain a serious competitive advantage. As part of this initiative, Inde was already working closely with Farmlands to implement a network infrastructure project and as a result, Inde's specialists were asked to upgrade their Wi-Fi infrastructure.

"Inde has been our go-to for network and security for the last several years. We have a strong partnership with them and bring them in whenever there's an opportunity to look at digital enablement or technology. They have some incredibly talented people that we can confidently rely on."

DARRIN COOKE,
HEAD OF DIGITAL OPERATIONS | FARMLANDS

As Farmlands recently merged two companies with separate IT platforms, they wanted to achieve standardisation across their entire environment. Due to their size, it was also important that their Wi-Fi infrastructure provided easy management, fast issue resolution, and the ability to deploy changes quickly when required.

The desired outcome of the upgrade was to deliver a seamless Wi-Fi experience for store customers, event guests, and staff to unlock digital opportunities. The final piece of the puzzle was making sure the solution was futureproofed so they could enable future capabilities as they continue on their digital transformation journey.

Our team of specialists identified Aruba Wi-Fi as the best option for the entire Farmlands environment due to its wide range of access points, scalability, cost-effective set-up, and easy management through Aruba Central.

Delivering better retail store experiences

Farmlands are focused on leveraging technology to deliver the best possible customer experience. The implemented

Aruba Wi-Fi solution provides a cohesive experience across all their stores and warehouses, empowering staff and delighting guests.

"Wireless has been a big focus of improvement for Farmlands—especially in the retail space. We're making significant investments in mobile devices for our stores and the Aruba Wi-Fi solution empowers our team to get the most value out of them," explained Darrin.

The new Wi-Fi experience has empowered Farmlands Co-operative to finally achieve:
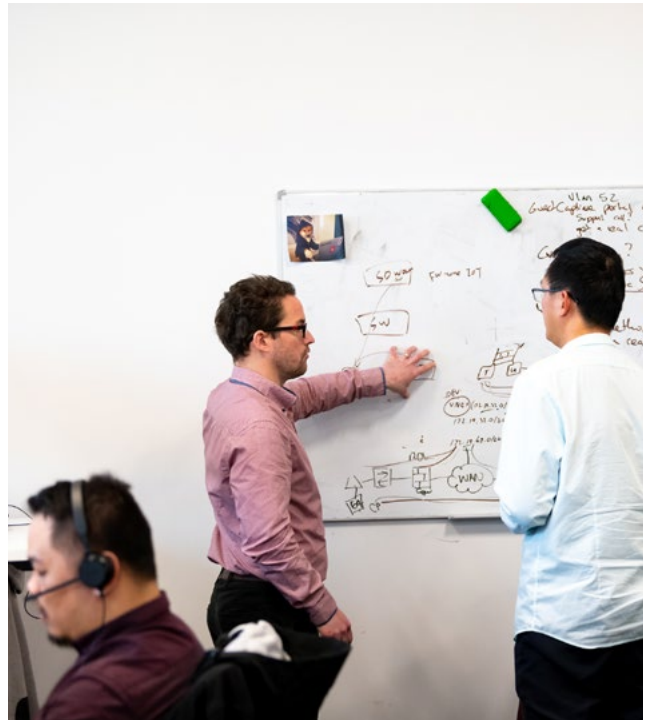
- **Streamlined stock keeping** across their retail store, warehouse, and yard areas

- **More efficient customer service** with yard access to product lookups and mobile POS

- **Better agility** with the technology they need to adapt to changing COVID regulations as a key essential service provider to the rural sector nationwide

- **Secure and simple guest internet access** that delivers better store experiences and a platform where upcoming events can be promoted when guests connect

"Inde allowed us to roll out a captive portal for guests so that any Farmlands' visitor can jump onto our guest Wi-Fi at any of our locations. It's completely secured and isolated from the rest of the network which means there's no security impact to our internal systems," explained Darrin.

To improve customer safety and satisfaction, Farmlands are also now looking ahead at how best to leverage our wireless enablement to enhance the customer experience. Customer safety and experience go hand in hand, so leveraging wireless technologies to enhance how we interact with our customers is something we're actively reviewing. Concepts such as touchless transactions and completely wireless payment methods become far more feasible with a reliable wireless infrastructure in place.

Seamless business operations

From their corporate offices to production facilities and stores, Farmlands are using their Wi-Fi upgrade to support mobility and flexibility across their entire environment.
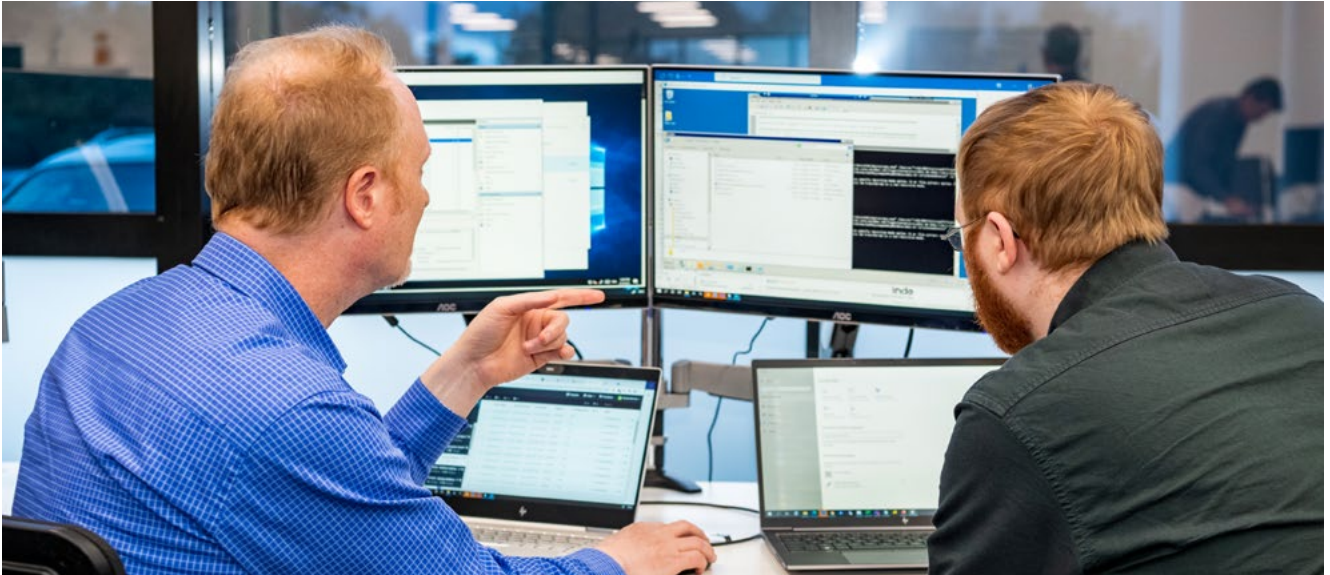

"Inde's solution means our staff can take their mobile devices from location to location and continue working seamlessly. There's no effort involved in connecting to a new Wi-Fi access point. If it's a Farmland's device it will automatically connect to the corporate network and if it's an employee's personal device they can jump onto our guest network," says Darrin.

By moving towards a mobile technology focus, Farmlands have empowered their operational staff to work more efficiently than ever. For example, with portable production facility management from handheld devices, operational teams can now work where they need to while maintaining full system control.

Alongside this, retail, warehouse and distribution centre employees can receipt stock as it's coming in and out directly at the location instead of going back to the terminal, saving valuable time.

Simple management across all locations

With Aruba Central, the Farmlands IT support team has real-time centralised management of all wireless networks, access points, and clients—no matter where they are or how they're being used. System monitoring is always available, and issues can be resolved quickly using the same tools for all locations. And when it comes to deploying a new site, it's fast and straightforward thanks to Aruba Central templates.

"Previously we were running on multiple disparate wireless technologies. This was difficult to manage, causing issues and creating significant operational overhead. We couldn't be happier with the Aruba solution. It's easy to deploy, easy to manage, and gives us visibility and control across all our locations," says Darrin.

In a crowded rural event environment, Farmlands are using digital initiatives to stand out. At the centre of this is reliable and fast connectivity. Inde set the company up with mobile Aruba Wi-Fi kits that provide instant and secure set-up anywhere—whether it's a corporate or customer event.

"Inde used the Aruba technology to build a mobile event kit for us. It's basically a site in a box that we can take anywhere and set up wireless connectivity in minutes. Once we fire it up, it's the same Wi-Fi experience as working from our corporate office or one of our sites. Farmlands' devices automatically connect and other devices can use the guest network. It's actually pretty awesome," explained Darrin.

Reliable connectivity for staff and stall visitors helps Farmlands stand out at events such as Fieldays where cutting-edge technology and innovation is a key focus.

As the Southern Hemisphere's largest agricultural event, being able to deliver a seamless digital experience is a big competitive advantage in that space.

The Aruba Wi-Fi kits empower staff to provide full interactive support to current and potential shareholders right there and then. This also goes beyond events to allow staff in the field to work from anywhere, such as on-site with shareholders to implement technology such as the Farmlands' FarmIQ platform.

Looking forward to future innovations

Now that their scalable Wi-Fi network is in place, Farmlands can easily update the solution to suit new digital initiatives and business demands in the future. "It's great to be able to make updates anytime without needing to re-purchase anything or experience downtime," says Darrin.

As they continue their digital innovation journey, Inde will continue to support Farmlands Co-operative as a trusted partner. The next step is to integrate Aruba's ClearPass services to align security of the wireless and wired networks, as well as improving posture checking capability, and setting up user self-service device onboarding.

Want to know more about achieving a seamless Wi-Fi experience for your business?
Drop us a line and we'll get a discussion started.

WWW.INDE.NZ/CONTACT-US | SUPPORT@INDE.NZ

New Zealand: 0800 694 633 | **Australia:** 03 8080 8067 | **From International:** +64 3 974 1074

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