



Background



ICT is playing an increasingly important role in schools. It's not just the growing popularity of computer studies that is driving this, as technology is now at the heart of the whole learning, communications and management process in modern education. In simple terms, schools cannot operate without effective, up-to-date IT systems and networks.

The problem is it's not always easy to access the additional funds required to extend and update a school's technology resources, and this means looking to alternative avenues of funding which may include leasing. The question is, how do you know you are getting a good deal? How do you avoid being caught out by hidden costs and penalties buried in the small print of a long, complex lease agreement?

The last thing that school managers want when it comes to signing up to long leases is a host of nasty surprises at the end of the agreement term. They want to know up front exactly what their commitments are year on year, and what they have to do to avoid any unexpected additional charges.

Most important of all, schools want to deal with a leasing company they can trust, one that understands teachers and school managers are not financial experts and that they want total transparency, honesty and fairness.



Challenge



The Green School, a girls' secondary school in Isleworth, West London, found itself in a fairly typical situation as teachers and school managers knew that some of their servers were ageing and their poor performance was starting to have a direct impact on the running of the school. So they called in an ICT supplier they had been dealing with and asked for their advice.

It transpired that the school needed a lot more than just a few replacement servers and compiled a long list of requirements including a wireless network, extensive recabling, new desktop PCs, a virtualised desktop infrastructure, interactive whiteboards and projectors as well as new servers. The total cost ran to several hundred thousand pounds.

The ICT provider introduced the school to two companies to handle the leasing and finance of the equipment, one of which was Maxxia, whom the school selected on the basis of our capabilities in this area, as well as our competitive, transparent approach.



Solution



In order to comply with the strict rules many schools face on funding, we provided an operating lease for The Green School to fund the cost of its new ICT, which came to almost £500,000. This effectively meant that the school rented all the equipment. The school's managers and governors were all made aware of the costs up front and all the details of the lease, ensuring maximum visibility. We also briefed them in detail about the implications of replacing kit early, extending the life of other components and dealing with the key issue of sustainable disposals.

As part of the deal we also provided the school with a comprehensive asset management tool which allows their managers to keep track of its lease contracts and obligations, whilst maintaining accurate records of the status of all the school ICT equipment. This provides them with a real time picture of their IT assets and financial liabilities throughout the course of the lease.

Why Maxxia?



Maxxia provided a structured payment schedule that fitted in with the school's cash flow and existing funding schedules. The school had also received a substantial bill from its previous leasing company for a payment due under the terms of its historic lease contract. Maxxia investigated the paperwork and helped the school to challenge the company's claim.

Not only did we provide exactly the right lease and asset management solution, we were also able to help the school recover a significant sum from the leasing company it had previously used to fund their previous ICT equipment.



Results

- ✓ School managers and governors were all briefed on the solutions provided and the terms around the lease. This also extended to new members of staff as they joined the school
- ✓ The Green School was able to replace all of the IT systems that they needed in order to provide the best education and experience for their pupils
- ✓ The net result was that the school was able to recover almost £50,000 from the previous leasing company. That's more than the cost of a teacher for a whole year

“Due to budget constraints across many areas of the school, we needed a lease structure that was both affordable and sustainable. Maxxia provided a structure that suited us perfectly; allowing us to proceed with immediate and on-going IT requirements across the school. Without the help of Maxxia, the school would have been £48,000 out of pocket. What was refreshing is that Maxxia were not looking to gain anything out of this process; it just formed part of their transparent and honest approach to relationship management”

John Wiffen
Director of Finance
The Green School

If you would like to find out about the best way to fund your future and existing equipment needs, feel free to speak to one of our experts:

 contact@maxxia.co.uk