cisco Meraki

Meraki for Elections

Don't Miss Another Vote

Secure access across your applications and environment, from any user, device, and location with Cisco Zero Trust.

Contents

The Elections Today

The 2020 Presidential election is right around the corner. In preparation for this big day, candidates have been campaigning around the country, sharing why they are the best person to lead the country. Earlier this year, primary elections began and voters started showing up to polling facilities to cast votes for their party's nominee.

Unfortunately, the early primaries experienced some major mishaps, resulting in negative press and exposure about election integrity and operations. As seen in the news coverage, a number of issues have surfaced. Some examples include long voter wait times, shortage of ballots, and delayed reporting on results. These issues lead to the overarching problem that election officials want to avoid at all costs, lower voter turnout. A poor voter turnout can mean a failed election system where voters lack confidence in the nation's election process. Additionally, given the recent COVID-19 pandemic, it's probably safe to say that the 2020 elections won't be like anything we've seen before.

There are many factors that contribute to the bleak outcomes stated above. Polling stations are typically managed and run by volunteers so some states may not have enough support to keep all of the planned number of polling stations opened. The lack of agility and flexibility to address last-minute changes in polling locations adds to the complexity of having smooth voting operations. Furthermore, the amount of visibility and analytics behind individual polling stations, county, and state-wide polling operations is minimal. On top of the challenges in operating polling stations effectively, there are concerns regarding cyber and physical security. Election officials want to provide a secure election process because that means people's trust in the elections. Current security solutions require expertise to implement and polling stations don't necessarily have these security professionals readily available to deploy these solutions.

With these difficulties in mind, how can polling facilities ensure that avoid negative press, have higher voter engagement, and deliver voting results in a timely fashion? **What is the vision forward for the elections?**

The Vision Forward

According to an article by The Hill, a political newspaper, "technology is key to rebuilding trust in the elections".[1] Surveys were distributed right after some of the early state primaries and the results showed that "8 in 10 voters said upgrades to voting technology would strengthen and build their trust in the elections."[2] Similarly, a polling device company, Smartmatic gathered feedback from voters and reported that "86 percent of voters who used electronic voting machines believed them to be the most secure voting system".[3]

In addition to regaining voter confidence in the elections, the Center for Democracy and Technology has stated that technology plays an important role in scaling the elections, maximizing voter turnout. This is especially true with the recent outbreak of COVID-19. Between the recent surveys and current events, it is becoming more and more imperative that technology has a big part to play in providing voters a secure election that depicts a healthy democracy.

Sources

1 The Hill, *Technology is key to rebuilding trust in the elections*

2 Center for Democracy & Technology, *Technology Can Assist Elections by Scaling Vote-By-Mail*

3 Smartmatic, Study: *Voters and poll workers see improved technology as key to restoring trust in the US voting system*

Meraki: the technlogy for Elections

The Meraki portfolio is completely cloud-based, allowing you to deploy an entire network in minutes while providing you the simplest user-interface (accessible through any web browser or through the mobile application) to monitor, troubleshoot, and configure.

Additionally, the Meraki cloud infrastructure removes the need for network controllers and additional servers -- all you need is the dashboard and the networking hardware.

Technology you can count on, without the technical expertise:

Due to the intuitive dashboard, Meraki is the perfect solution for those who may not be as technically savvy. We provide enterprise-grade solutions with simplicity in mind; ensuring that technology is not a hindrance but rather an enabler to let you focus on the things that matter.

Why Meraki?

Powering and connecting polling stations across the country with Cisco Meraki results in:
- Uninterrupted, secure election operations
- A deeper knowledge of voter trends and behaviors, which results in; increased voter engagement,
- A smooth voting experience for all, and most importantly,
- Restored voter trust in the election
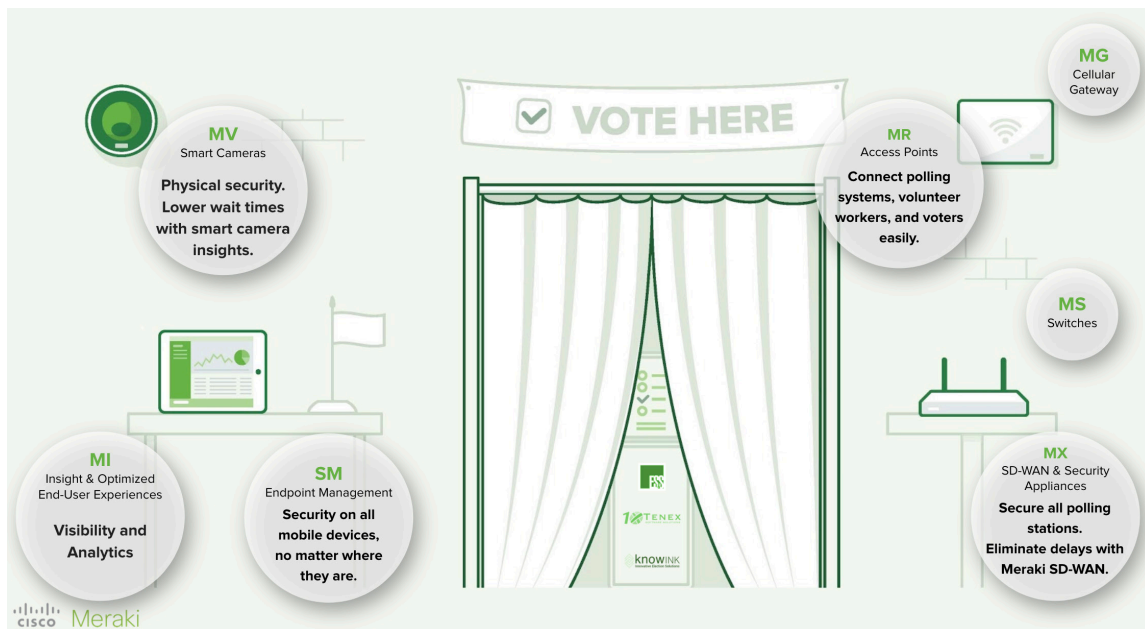
Meraki solves Election challenges

Uninterrupted, secure election operation

Meraki gives you an in-depth view of all security activities and offers relevant remediation steps to get back to safety when any malicious items enter the network, so you can secure all your polling stations. Additionally, you can dynamically enforce security on all mobile devices, no matter where they are because Meraki offers granular device context and visibility while automatically taking the right steps to ensure devices are compliant. With Meraki, you can also eliminate election delays by avoiding potential down-time and poor bandwidth distribution and delivering the desired level of performance for any of your critical applications. Last but not least, Meraki provides physical security for an untampered voting experience with its smart cameras.

Deeper knowledge of voter trends and behaviors

When connecting polling devices, volunteer workers, and voters, with Meraki, the Meraki management dashboard gives you real-time insights such as; comparisons of voter trends between sites, which ultimately allows you to understand how you can increase voter engagement.

A smooth voting experience for all

Part of making the election process a success is ensuring that the voting experience runs smoothly for everyone. A good voting experience means lowering the average time voters spend waiting in line. Meraki allows you to achieve this by providing advanced analytics on how many people are present at each polling station, which lines are the busiest, what hours of the day are quietest etc. To make the experience even more efficient, you can set up polling devices with a dedicated application, like a voting app, to ensure devices are used for their intended purposes. As poll stations move towards electronic polling methods, Meraki allows you to make your polling station more resilient by letting you know exactly how voters are experiencing these electronic methods.

A restored voter trust in the elections

The Meraki solution enables polling stations to run as efficiently as possible, by providing technology that delivers election results in a timely fashion, and by giving the tools that are useful in giving the best voting experience possible, ultimately resulting in a restored public trust in the election process.

Secure all polling stations

WITH ENTERPRISE-GRADE SECURITY SOLUTIONS FROM CISCO

Every Meraki MX SD-WAN & security appliance comes with: Cisco Umbrella, Talos, ISE, AMP, IDS/IPS

Security in one place -- Security Center:

- Analytics and reporting on prevention and intrusion data/activities at no additional costs backed with Cisco security technology

- Go to one central place for all security analysis on their network. Allows for an in-depth view of all security activities taken place by the different security solutions integrated in the MX (Cisco AMP, Cisco IDS/IPS, Cisco Threat Grid)

- If there are any malicious items in the network, the Security Center will offer relevant remediation steps to get back to safety

- Cisco Umbrella + Meraki: Protect users who are surfing the web from being attacked

MX

BRANCH

AUTO VPN

WAN LINK

INTERNET

AUTO VPN

WAN LINK

MX

HQ / DC
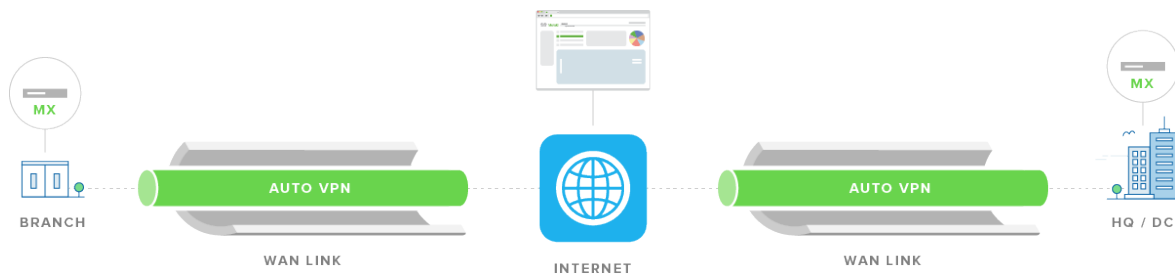
Visual representation of Meraki SD-WAN

Eliminate election delays with Meraki SD-WAN

- Avoid potential down-time and poor bandwidth distribution with the easiest and fastest SD-WAN solution

- Deliver the desired level of performance for any critical cloud application

- Easily create up to 15 SSIDs to cater to all your user needs; voters, volunteers, employees, etc

- Configure specific SSID restrictions so your network is used as efficiently as possible

Systems Manager, Mobile Device Management solution

Dynamically enforce security on all mobile devices, no matter where they are

Systems Manager protects devices based on customizable security policies.

By providing granular device context and visibility, Systems Manager automatically takes the right steps to ensure devices are secured.

- Fine-grained policies can be deployed to check whether devices are encrypted, locked, jailbroken, and running the latest OS version before dynamically assigning device settings, apps, and content in order to secure resources and data.

Features: full device wipe, selective wipe, lock jailbroken devices, device location, restricted access to services, enforcement of passcodes, force encryption backup, etc.

Increase voter engagement

WITH DEEPER KNOWLEDGE OF VOTER TRENDS AND BEHAVIORS

- Connect polling devices, polling systems, volunteer workers, and voters easily while gaining rich analytics

- Provide unmatched opportunity voter engagement with real-time location statistics.

- Compare voter trends between sites

- Understand voter dwell time

A smooth voting experience for all

Systems Manager provides **total application delivery and control:** You can deploy in-house developed applications and purchase Apple and Google store apps in bulk.

- Set polling devices into 'Single-App Mode' to ensure devices are used for its intended purposes

- Configure settings and restrictions onto devices for more device efficiency

Make your polling station more resilient

By using Meraki Insight, polling sites benefit from improved insight and a drastic reduction in troubleshooting effort so that you can focus on providing a seamless voter experience.

As poll stations move towards electronic polling methods such as cloud-hosted polling applications, Meraki Insight is valuable in giving you visibility and analytics into how these applications are performing in your network. In addition to overall application performance, **Meraki Insight also provides data on how voters are experiencing the application over time.**

Lower the average time voters spend waiting in line

With the advanced analytics built into the Meraki smart camera line, such as, people counting, you can always be in the know of how many people are present at the polling station, which lines are busiest, what hours of the day are quietest, etc, enabling poll stations to mske decisions that will result in shorter wait times.

Cisco Meraki can help restore voter trust in the elections.

Meraki provides the opportunity to secure the election sytem in the most efficient way possible alongside powerful Cisco technology. This means, enabling you with the Cisco Meraki platform; an end-to-end network solution that focuses on bringing you technology that simply works.

Meraki is flexible. With powerful APIs, polling stations can create custom reporting dashboards, pooling together security and performance data from multiple data sources.

Together with Cisco Meraki, election officials can be confident in the elections operating securely and efficiently to ensure as many people vote as possible, ultimately, restoring trust in the election process.
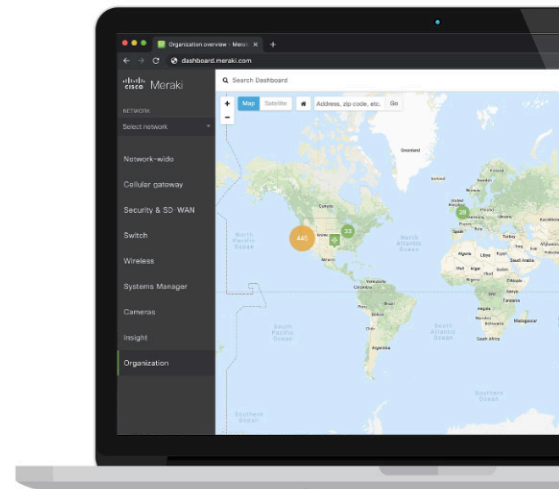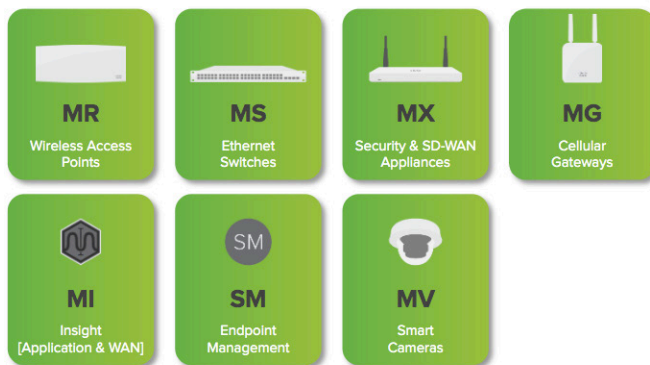
Don't miss another vote, with Cisco Meraki.