

HOTEL CONNECTS GUESTS WITH A FORTINET WIRELESS LAN SOLUTION



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– Neeraj Subramanian
Information Technology Manager, The Langham, Melbourne



THE LANGHAM
Melbourne

CHALLENGES

The Langham, Melbourne is lauded among five-star luxury Melbourne hotels for its “service with poise” and natural sense of sophistication.

Situated in the exclusive riverside Southbank precinct and offering stunning views of the Melbourne city skyline, the Yarra River and Federation Square, The Langham, Melbourne offers an opulent inner-city experience.

The 25-floor hotel has 387 luxuriously appointed rooms including 45 executive club rooms complete with personalised butler service.

Other than the hotel’s highly acclaimed spa, bar, and restaurant, the hotel also offers extensive conference and meeting facilities.

The Langham, Melbourne is known for its service and attention to detail, and with that reputation, it needed to ensure that all guests could access high-speed Internet anywhere in the hotel.

Neeraj Subramanian, Information Technology manager at The Langham, Melbourne said, “We needed a wireless LAN solution that could provide a strong and stable signal strength, despite the potential hurdles of our concrete buildings. The ideal solution for our guests is to be able to surf the Internet without any interference in different areas of the hotel and this is made possible with the Fortinet product.

“This is especially important for guests who expect seamless connection whether they

DETAILS

CUSTOMER: The Langham, Melbourne

INDUSTRY: Hospitality

LOCATION: Victoria, Australia

CHALLENGES

- Proliferation of wireless devices required network access to all areas of the hotel.
- Surge in online users demanded a strong and stable connection.
- Hotel’s layout and the concrete building is challenging for pervasive wireless coverage.

RESULTS

- Guests able to connect wirelessly with various devices on the premises.
- Simplified installation and management by eliminating need for channel planning.
- Improved guest satisfaction and reduced demands on IT staff.

FORTINET PRODUCTS USED

- MC4100 Controller Series
- Fortinet AP Series

are relaxing at the bar, or busy working on events in the conference rooms. We needed a WLAN provider that could not only reach every corner of the hotel, but one that could also accommodate unexpected surges in guests' online activity."

Most guests are tech-savvy and expect nothing less than an efficient and stable Internet connection in their hotel. Many arrive each day with the latest gadgets, including wireless devices such as laptops and smartphones.

Subramanian said, "We wanted our guests to relax at our premises, knowing they can connect to their friends and family, or business partners, whenever they need to. Having a stable Internet connection these days is expected.

"The Langham, Melbourne needed a WLAN solution that was easy to implement, to minimize downtime and guest inconvenience."

SOLUTION

The Langham, Melbourne explored a number of solutions, all of which were time consuming in terms of installation, before choosing to deploy a Fortinet wireless local area network (WLAN) on the premises.

Fortinet's approach represents the industry's most complete wireless WLAN solution from air to core, addressing the hotel's need for over-the-air coverage, high user density and performance.

The Fortinet WLAN dual radio a/b/g/n access points (APs) provides comprehensive wireless coverage across the hotel. When put into action at the premises, the network was able to handle more than 150 guests online at once.

Unlike most legacy systems that use micro-cells with alternating channels, Fortinet wireless LAN solution uses unique architecture that enables all APs to operate off a single, seamless channel, eliminating the need for channel planning.

The solution enables IT administrators, who may not be wireless experts, to easily compensate for coverage holes by simply adding additional APs.

Once the cabling was completed, it only took one day for the configuration to be completed and another day of testing and issue resolution for all 170 access points for the system to be up and running.

BENEFITS

The hotel was impressed with the ease of implementation. Unlike other vendors, there was no need to spend long hours to do channel planning.

The Langham, Melbourne can easily and rapidly install more APs to adapt to changes in its needs. Fortinet's single-channel solution means channel-replanning is not required, and by simply adding more APs any coverage holes can be plugged seamlessly.

The wireless controller used at the hotel also had a simple user interface that reduces the configuration time. Deployment of updates can be done from the controller and automatically pushed out to each AP, reducing time spent on upgrades.

Subramanian said, "The Fortinet solution fit our requirements best, as it was able to provide a strong, stable signal strength, despite our hotel's concrete buildings. The design of the external antennas definitely suited a hotel environment."

Fortinet is also able to handle high user activity, especially during important events and functions at the hotel's conference rooms.

"A smooth and reliable Internet connection is crucial when it comes to hosting large events at our event rooms at The Langham, Melbourne. The Fortinet solution is able to handle the needs of our Wi-Fi users, without the risk of overcrowding."

The Fortinet wireless LAN technology specializes in offering a high-density, mission-critical network that guarantees service assurance, ensuring that the Internet network in the hotel is at its optimum performance level each time, regardless of the number of users accessing the service.

"Thanks to Fortinet's ability to support high densities of wireless users with no interference, we have experienced a significant reduction of guest complaints, from an average of 150 issues per month, to five issues, in the two months that we have started using Fortinet. Guests are now able to rely on The Langham, Melbourne's ability to give them an uninterrupted and accountable wireless connection."

Due to the success and reliability of the new wireless Internet access, The Langham, Melbourne has built marketing promotions around its Wi-Fi offerings. For example a recent promotion offered guests a "best available rate of the day," which included complimentary Internet with Wi-Fi and iPhone capability.



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