



Success Story

Five-Star London Hotel Gets Bespoke Switching Solution



Hospitality

INDUSTRY



CUSTOMER

Claridge's
Hotel



REGION

UK



SOLUTIONS

Zyxel
Switching
Solution

Overview

Challenges

- Provide guests with stable, fast, and secure connectivity
- Solution must preserve historic building's structure
- Main administrative network must be separate from guest network for added security
- Challenging deployment environment

Benefits

- Ability to run independent networks for guest and staff
- Stable, high-speed connectivity throughout hotel
- Easy management
- Sufficient bandwidth for streaming services, VoIP, and other demanding applications
- Excellent price to performance ratio
- Future-proof

Solutions

- Gigabit Ethernet switches

"We pride ourselves on our impeccable service, so we must cater to our guests' every whim. We needed a powerful network backbone that could accommodate any guest Wi-Fi demand, no matter how obscure."

Claridge's Hotel

Background

Built in the 1890s, Claridge's is a five-star luxury hotel located in the heart of Mayfair, London. Part of the Maybourne Group, which includes two other prestigious hotels in London, The Berkeley and The Connaught, Claridge's is widely regarded as one of the UK's most famed hotels, having won countless international awards for its service and style.

Due to its illustrious history and reputation, the rich and famous continue to flock to Claridge's over the many other luxury hotels in town. World-renowned celebrities who have taken residence include Audrey Hepburn, Alfred Hitchcock,

Brad Pitt, Mick Jagger, U2, and Mariah Carey.

The hotel also has long-standing connections with royalty, with many dubbing it an "annex to Buckingham Palace." Several royal parties have been held at Claridge's over the years, including the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh's ruby wedding party, and Charles and Diana's wedding reception.

Challenges

Claridge's prides itself on its impeccable service. For generations, it has hosted the most exclusive clientele from across the globe, with room prices starting at several hundred pounds per night to decadent suites costing three times as much. This means the hotel must provide the most unique and genuinely bespoke services to meet the high expectations of its guests. That includes providing flawless Internet connectivity.

Claridge's is a Grade II listed building, meaning it has to adhere to much stricter requirements over changes made to the building's interior or exterior. Because of this, all 203 rooms were recently connected via a slow ADSL network. The building had obviously not been designed with cable

management in mind, meaning delivery of reliable Wi-Fi has been an ongoing challenge, particularly in guest rooms.

As a result, the hotel was receiving a high number of complaints from guests due to poor network speeds and unreliable wireless coverage. Claridge's quickly needed to deploy a secure network that could cater to any guest demand, in a particularly challenging architectural environment.

Another challenge for the hotel was to keep its main administration network separate from its guest network, for security reasons.

Solutions and Benefits

Claridge's engaged the services of Zyxel valued partner Cyberware Limited, which provides the hotel with Wi-Fi as a service via its Cyberair platform. Cyberware installed an independent network backbone to power the guest service using Zyxel's Gigabit Ethernet switches. This network operates alongside Claridge's existing private network, providing guests with a fast and reliable Internet connection throughout the building.

Powering the new guest Wi-Fi, the Zyxel Gigabit network enables everything from wireless media streaming on mobile devices, large file downloads, and VoIP calls to setting up bespoke network access for guest events or conferences hosted in the hotel.

Cyberware needed a premium switching solution that could handle extremely high network bandwidths, operate reliably in challenging environments, and was simple

to configure and use. The Zyxel Gigabit Ethernet switches fit the bill perfectly, offering just as much functionality and performance as Claridge's existing admin network, at a fraction of the price. Since deployment, the switches have never been stretched beyond 50 percent bandwidth capacity, even during large events.

The Zyxel switches are simple to use, allowing engineers to create complicated configurations and set up additional IP-based systems, such as phone ports, tills, and payment terminals. Due to the building design, the Zyxel switches had to be deployed in challenging conditions, such as hot dusty cupboards and laundry rooms with no air conditioning. None of the switches have ever gone down, consistently performing at optimum levels. Zyxel switches are also covered by a lifetime warranty for extra peace of mind that the network is future-proof.



Data security is absolutely vital to Claridge's, which was the main driver behind having two separate networks for hotel admin and guest access. Given the caliber of its clients, the hotel cannot risk guest data getting into the wrong hands. The Zyxel switches provide private virtual LAN (VLAN) capability, a feature not often found on switches at this price point. This enables Claridge's to set up certain applications in independent simulated environments on the same LAN, in different physical

locations within the hotel, for added network security. Claridge's is now looking at how it can further improve wireless capability within its rooms, such as video over LAN, wireless lighting control, and video streaming from personal devices. This will require further investment in Zyxel switches to power the additional Wi-Fi demands placed on the network. This will help Claridge's continue to live up to its reputation as one of the most luxurious and exclusive hotels in the world.

About Zyxel Communications

Focused on innovation and customer-centricity, Zyxel Communications has been connecting people to the Internet for nearly 30 years. Our ability to adapt and innovate with networking technology places us at the forefront of creating connectivity for telcos and service providers, business and home users. Zyxel is building the networks of tomorrow, unlocking potential, and meeting the needs of the modern workplace — powering people at work, life, and play. Zyxel, Your Networking Ally.

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