



Milan's leading hotel uses network to secure premier position and provide superlative guest experience

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Hotel Principe di Savoia

Industry: Hospitality

Location: Milan, Italy

Number of Employees: 350

Challenge

- Use technology innovation to continually improve and differentiate guest experience
- Manage hotel operations more efficiently and cost effectively

Solution

- Cisco BYOD Smart Solution running over Cisco Borderless Network architecture enabling core bandwidth of 100Mbps with fixed and mobile traffic separation

Results

- Ability to deliver new guest services, which are expected to grow revenues by 15 to 20 percent
- Network problems have been eliminated, resulting in fewer complaints
- Guests can stay connected both inside the hotel and within its grounds, securely and with no risk of interference

Challenge

It takes an exceptional network to deliver the experience demanded by today's top-flight hotel guests. Ubiquitous Internet connectivity and a near-infinite variety of in-room telephony and TV services are demanded equally as much as fine dining and world-class concierge facilities. The Hotel Principe di Savoia, Milan's leading five-star hotel, understands this only too well. Part of the prestige Dorchester Collection, it looks to differentiate itself through technology innovation.

"Customers are becoming more price sensitive, and at the same time expect to receive a constantly improving service," says Vincenzo Forza, financial controller at the Hotel Principe di Savoia, "so to remain competitive we have to drive our service levels to new highs."

Historically the hotel had used separately-cabled networks to deliver guest and administration services, while its telephone system had become obsolete. Reliability was compromised by the complexity of the infrastructure, and management and maintenance overheads were high. "The network has to be the cornerstone of our vision to continue to be the best hotel in Milan," says Forza, "and, in the past, we had challenges in delivering a consistent technology service to our guests."

To deliver the ultimate customer experience, back office and front-of-house staff needed an infrastructure that would empower them. Meanwhile guests increasingly looked to connect personal devices to the hotel's wireless LAN. That meant an easy-to-manage bring-your-own-device (BYOD) environment was essential.

Solution

The Hotel Principe di Savoia embarked on a major refurbishment program and, with the help of its local partner Zi 1 ONE, implemented a Cisco® BYOD Smart Solution delivered over a Cisco Borderless Network. "The idea was to run all our systems across a converged platform that was BYOD-enabled to protect the investment," says Andrea Calò, IT manager at the Hotel Principe di Savoia. "Cisco was always our first choice because it offers best-of-breed solutions, reinforced by the wealth of knowledge that goes into its technology development."



“Being able to segment network domains means that our 350 staff can collaborate effectively and share information in real time. At the same instant, guests can enjoy uninterrupted access to the Internet and HD IPTV services, without any threat of intrusion or decline in quality of service.”

Vincenzo Forza
Financial Controller
Hotel Principe di Savoia



The new network includes around 400 Cisco Catalyst® 2960, 2970, and 3650-X Series Switches, which together create a virtual LAN in which traffic can be separated to cater for the needs of different applications. “Being able to segment network domains means that our 350 staff can collaborate effectively and share information in real time,” says Forza. “At the same instant, guests can enjoy uninterrupted access to the Internet and HD IPTV services, without any threat of intrusion or decline in quality of service.”

Mobility adds an extra dimension. Unlike many enterprises where IT departments usually determine BYOD policy, the hotel has to help ensure that guests enjoy open wireless access, regardless of device or location. The Cisco BYOD Smart Solution, comprising 200 Cisco Aironet® 1140 Wireless Access Points and two Cisco 5508 Wireless Controllers, extends this flexibility 24 hours a day across 11 floors, 400 luxury rooms and suites, and seven bars and restaurants.

Results

The Cisco Borderless Network is already having a positive impact. Since its implementation, the hotel has not experienced a single serious network outage. Meanwhile, network performance has increased to speeds of 100Mbps, while cost and complexity have been significantly reduced. The in-room IPTV experience extends to over 100 HD channels, streamed in 12 different languages, all delivered via the network. Guest complaints about the quality of TV services have evaporated, clear evidence that previous network issues have been resolved.

“Stability, bandwidth, and availability are no longer issues for us,” says Forza, “so we’re free to create new guest services, which could generate between 15 and 20 percent in new revenues.” Enhancing the guest experience, such new services include mobile concierge and wireless checkout facilities. It is also easier to market those innovations. For instance, using the network, staff can send messages and targeted promotions to specific rooms or groups of rooms.

The wireless experience has been transformed. “With our Cisco BYOD Smart Solution, guests like the fact that they can always stay connected, especially in gardens and al fresco drinking and dining areas,” says Calò. “Coverage is up to 100 percent and, by providing separate access points for staff use, there is no risk of interference between the two domains.”

Network management is much simpler. For example, requests to provide Mac users with Internet access are no longer a problem. Basic tasks such as mapping printers, scanners, and fax machines to the network, are completed in a fraction of the time that it used to take. “We’ve moved from constant firefighting to proactive management,” says Calò, “and we thus feel much more in control. In most cases we set policies to avoid potential network issues. Should an event occur, we’re able to identify and resolve it before guests even notice.”

Finally, the hotel’s IT team is free to spend more time on transformational projects. One such example is an initiative to use the network to consolidate and centralize building management systems such as lighting, heating, and air conditioning. This capability also allows guests to personalize their own room settings via an IP console.

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IT Manager
Hotel Principe di Savoia

Next Steps

Selecting a network platform that would be compatible with future versions was especially important to Hotel Principe di Savoia. It's likely that the hotel will implement many of the new technologies and features embedded in the Cisco Borderless Network architecture. With EnergyWise, for example, it can measure, report, and reduce energy consumption for all devices connected to the network. The hotel's video surveillance security system will eventually be moved to the new platform, taking advantage of Cisco Medianet and VideoStream technologies, which allow different video functions to be prioritized and managed across the same infrastructure.

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco architectures and solutions described in this case study, please go to:

www.cisco.com/go/borderless

www.cisco.com/go/byod

For further information on Hotel Principe di Savoia, please go to:

www.hotelprincipedisavoia.com

Product List

Routing and switching

- Cisco Catalyst 2960, 2970, and 3650-X Series Switches

Wireless

- Cisco Aironet 1140 Wireless Access Points
- Cisco 5508 Wireless Controllers



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