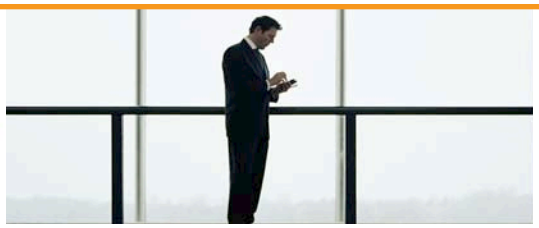

CASE STUDY

Hospitality

Farnham Castle Turns to Aruba Networks for Help in Providing the Royal Treatment to its Clients

Farnham Castle has overlooked the historic market town of Farnham, Surrey, England since the year 1138. The Castle has played host to many of the Kings and Queens of the realm who have passed through the gatehouse, using the Castle as a base from which to hunt deer on the grounds.

Recognised as one of the most historic buildings in Southern England, its role as the Palace of the Bishops of Winchester has made it one of the oldest, most continuously inhabited buildings in Europe.

The Castle today is the home of the internationally renowned Farnham Castle International Briefing and Conference Centre, providing intercultural management training and meeting facilities for many of the world's leading companies.

With buildings dating back nearly 900 years, walls that are in some cases more than 3 metres (11 feet) thick, and the restrictions imposed by the need to maintain the historic castle's structure, deploying a reliable wireless LAN (WLAN) service for the briefing centre's clients may have been seen as too challenging. However the Castle's IT programme manager chose Aruba Networks wireless infrastructure, and within three days had coverage to all the key rooms.

As a charitable trust running the Castle for the Church of England, Farnham Castle works closely with English Heritage to maintain the 'Ancient Monument.' Much of the structure was modernised in 1662, however, strict guidelines must be followed on any work that is done within the Castle. This presents unique challenges in offering the facilities of a modern international business training and conference centre.

The Centre considered deploying wireless Internet access for its clients on a number of occasions. However, concerns over whether a system could be deployed that would offer reliable connectivity delayed the decision to proceed.

In 2006, Microfocus, a regular client of the briefing centre generously offered a grant to install wireless access, not only for the benefit of their own staff while attending meetings, but also for other clients.

The deployment of an Aruba 800 Mobility Controller and ten Aruba AP-61 Access Points, which took only three days to install, now provides Internet access for guests attending training courses, conferences, and wedding receptions at the Castle's extensive facilities.

"As a charitable trust responsible for operating and maintaining an Ancient Monument, we could only deploy a low

FARNHAM CASTLE
INTERNATIONAL BRIEFING & CONFERENCE CENTRE

Requirements:

- Scalable and reliable 802.11 mobility infrastructure
- Dependable Internet access to guests in a very difficult Wi-Fi environment
- Low density of access points providing extensive coverage

Solution:

- Aruba MC-800 Mobility Controller equipped with Policy Enforcement Firewall, Wireless Intrusion Protection and Remote AP software modules
- 16 AP-61 single-radio 802.11 a/b/g Access Points

Benefits:

- Centralised management provides for a low maintenance solution
- Minimal impact on the existing infrastructure of the Castle
- Thin APs streamline and simplify deployment
- Aruba's Adaptive Radio Management automatically adjusts to delivery optimal performance
- Integrated Captive Portal can restrict "free" Internet access to clients

density of access points across the site so as to minimise cabling, as well as meet budget constraints," said Matthew MacLachlan, programme manager at Farnham Castle. "We are very pleased with the quality of the wireless coverage. Aruba's Adaptive Radio Management is particularly good at delivering a quality signal in what we thought would be a very difficult Wi-Fi environment."

While the initial deployment provided coverage throughout the training centre and the main castle building, the guest rooms in the stables block had not been provisioned for wireless connectivity. As a scheduled ancient monument, extending the network to other parts of the site (such as the stables block) was not a simple matter of installing a cable run around the outside of the building; initially the only option would have been to run an Ethernet cable within the sewer underneath the car park.

However, by 2007, the Centre found that regular clients were asking to book into specific guest rooms – those rooms that were close enough to the Castle to benefit from coverage of the WLAN. Wanting to meet the needs of their delegates, in 2008, the Centre used the flexibility of the Aruba solution, and, purchasing several more AP-61 access points, deployed a remote access solution for the guest rooms over the stable's existing broadband link. Remote Access Points (RAP) now provide Wi-Fi coverage for the guest rooms. Each RAP is connected back over a run of Ethernet to a broadband router, which connects over a DSL line through the Internet to the Castle's main MC-800 Mobility Controller. "Connecting the guest rooms in the stables block using RAPs seemed preferable to laying a cable in a medieval sewer," concluded MacLachlan.

CASE STUDY

Hospitality

Company Overview:

Farnham Castle International Briefing & Conference Centre provides all the needs of a modern international business training and conference centre, as well as an impressive location for corporate and private events. It has 14 fully equipped meeting and conference rooms, state of the art video conferencing facilities, 32 en-suite Bedrooms with tv, radio and internet access all based within 5 acres of historic gardens and grounds, a short distance from London Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

"We are very pleased with the quality of the wireless coverage. Aruba's Adaptive Radio Management is particularly good at delivering a quality signal in what we thought would be a very difficult Wi-Fi environment.

Matthew MacLachlan

Programme Manager
Farnham Castle

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