

CASE STUDY

ARUBA ENABLES FIRST-CLASS GUEST EXPERIENCE FOR 135-ACRE HOTELS PROPERTY ON CROATIA'S DALMATIAN COAST



BEYOND NATURAL ADVANTAGES

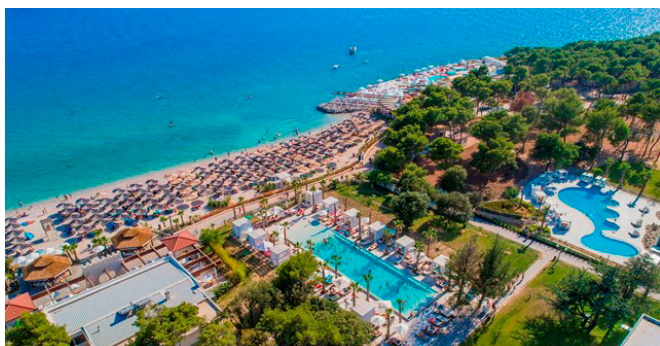
The Amadria Park occupies an enviable position on Croatia's beautiful Dalmatian coast. It is located near the medieval City of Šibenik, home to two UNESCO sites, national parks, and scores of unspoilt islands.

However, natural, geographic advantages are not enough to secure long-term success in the hotel sector. Amadria Park's vision has launched them on a multi-year journey of continued innovation. "Smartphones and network connectivity have changed the hospitality sector, especially with millennials and business travellers who are very technology aware," says Katarina Lilić, Executive Director, Amadria Park Šibenik. "We must be prepared to deliver on their expectations. Skype, social media, IPTV ... these things must work perfectly. It is important for private travellers and it is vital when we host business conferences."

Technology to enhance the guest experience

Technology, continues Lilić, underpins the whole enterprise, from the visitor experience to facilities management. "Both business and leisure travellers bring more than one device with them, and they expect Wi-Fi everywhere. For us, we now use mobile devices across every aspect of the hotel, from administration to management and to communication."

Naturally, the network must work perfectly. On 3rd party holiday site reviews, the Amadria Park management can't afford for a poor network to be a cause for spoiled visitor stays. The network needs to support innovation.



"This is a 135-acre site and we need the network to work across all our facilities, indoor and outdoor," says Lilić. "We cannot accept interruptions to the service, and we need to be able to create different levels of service."

"Visitors, whether groups or individuals, require different types of connectivity. This could be a child streaming cartoons on YouTube, or a business guest having a quick skype call in our conference centre. Either way, we need a high-quality network."

REQUIREMENTS

- Ensure seamless Wi-Fi connectivity extension throughout the property, including beachfront
- Lay foundation for future innovations around unique guest experiences and engagements
- Enable a digital platform for increased staff productivity

SOLUTION

- 802.11ac Aruba indoor and outdoor APs
- Aruba Campus LAN architecture
- Aruba AirWave Network Management
- Aruba Mobility Controllers
- Aruba BLE Beacons
- Aruba Meridian Platform for Mobile Engagement
- Aruba Analytics & Location Engine (ALE)
- Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager
- Mobile App in the conference centre
- HPE OfficeConnect switches
- HPE FlexFabric DC Core & Access Switches
- HPE FlexNetwork Router

BENEFITS

- Consistent indoor and outdoor connectivity across entire 135-acre site
- End-to-end solution with single vendor, and clear innovation roadmap
- Establish single view, and management, of network
- The means to centrally control, manage and secure guest access
- Establish single view, and simpler management, of network

“With Aruba, we will create more insightful profiles of guests, and therefore deliver more relevant personalised services and offerings. This is at the heart of what a great hotel should be. A home from home experience.”

KATARINA LILIĆ, DIRECTOR
AMADRIA PARK ŠIBENIK

From an operational perspective, staff count is finite. Amadria Park wants guests to be able to order food and drink from anywhere on the site, including the beach, via an app. Staff would then locate guests via the same app and guests wouldn't need to carry cash or credit cards.

"We have guests' comfort and security in mind at all times," says Lilić.

Amadria Park not only wanted the switching and access points to support the network challenges, but also the management platform to govern access and monitor usage in a suitably granular manner.

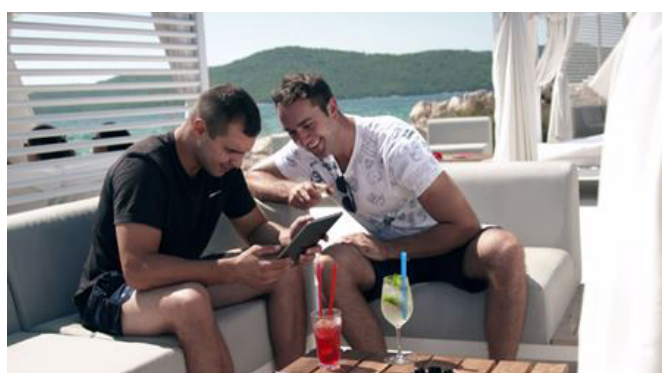
An adaptable solution to fit a complex site

With such a large and complex site (the property includes five hotels, with more than 1,540 rooms and the employee count swells to 1,300 in high season), we need to reduce complexity. One strategy has always been to work with a single vendor. "We want the same network experience, whether you're in a beach bar or conference centre," says Zrinko Badanjak, Chief Technology Officer, Amadria Park Zagreb. "This

is a high-density environment and we need the best wireless network possible."

Amadria Park had a number of specific network requirements: access points had to be adaptable to work in any mode of management; the switching infrastructure had to be stackable for high-availability and ease of maintenance, easily manageable and offer PoE ports and reduced power routing; there had to be a centralised management software for the entire network, wired and wireless.

Transforming the network is not a simple and one-shot task. New architectures need to be interoperable with the existing technology and managing the entire system needs to be simplified where possible. This is a value which Amadria Park expected from their solution partner. "Since we still have some legacy equipment, multivendor support is very important," says Tomislav Bračanov, IT Manager, Amadria Park Šibenik. "Also, we must rely on a certified local partner with technical knowledge to finish the installation. We were very conscious of driving maximum value from a long-term investment."



BEST-IN-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE

Bračanov and his team were introduced to Aruba via a local partner, a long-term supplier of IT solutions to the group. He says Aruba was engaged from the very first meeting: "The Aruba team was involved directly and in full cooperation with local partner, Integra. It was a clear, teamwork approach."

Bračanov says he was impressed by the Aruba best-in-class infrastructure with switching and its broad portfolio of access points and mobility controllers. More importantly, Aruba offered a full stack of management software, access control and the Bluetooth Beacon-based Meridian platform for Mobile Engagement.

"We quickly realised that with Aruba we are guaranteed high quality," says Bračanov. "Aruba offers excellent support, with technologies which are unparalleled on the market. Aruba already works with hundreds of global customers who are best in their field."

The Aruba solution comprises 400 Instant Access Points (a mix of 200- and high-density 300-Series), two Aruba 7210 Controllers, Aruba 2930F Campus switches, and Aruba AirWave Network Management. In addition, there is a Proof of Concept examining Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager and Beacons in the 1,500-capacity conference centre.

Years ahead of the competition

Fully implemented, the Aruba network solution leaves Amadria Park comfortably ahead of its local competition. The entire 135-acre site is covered, with a clear plan to extend the network to the new hotels and facilities.

"We're several steps ahead of our competitors, perhaps even years in front by using an application-aware infrastructure," says Bračanov. "We have a much more open and adaptable network. We're not forced to work in a single mode and all our Aruba APs can work in any architecture, based on our needs."

Bračanov's team are now able to easily manage the network, and react to issues within minutes, leaving them free to focus resources on the most important aspect of the hospitality business: the guest experience.

Better network, better guest experience

Amadria Park is now able to comfortably accommodate a range of different conferences. "We can have a medical conference with 500 doctors one week, and the next week an IT conference with 1,000 IT professionals, each with very different application requirements and very different data usage," says Lilić. "We can ensure seamless, uninterrupted connectivity, adapting network performance to suit."

A better guest experience translates directly to better reviews. Better reviews generate more business.

"For the hospitality sector, Wi-Fi is just as important as hot water in rooms," says Badanjak. "Our customers appreciate it when they have not just connectivity but the best connectivity. Also, we gain detailed insights into how our customers use the networks and learn a lot from it to enhance their experience."

"With Aruba, a network is not just a cost centre, it becomes an interaction tool with customers and a business decision enabler. The Aruba platform can be a critical differentiation on the market. Regular content changes which can be done at any time on the Meridian platform, are an amazing advantage and we can use this flexibility to adapt to any new event in only a few hours. We're comfortable with the fact that we have invested in one of the most advanced network access control and guest onboarding tools on the market."

Understanding the guests

Understanding customers and their personal preferences is a key objective of any establishment in the hospitality market. The data which is available in the network is therefore invaluable to the business and extracting information from it is a strategic objective for Amadria Park.

"We are extremely happy to be working with Aruba because of their innovation and reliability," says Badanjak. "We like the fact that we are getting this world-class technology and the presence of the local Aruba team who are amazing. They work with us regularly, make recommendations, understand our business and even help us promote our hotels. We are not just a customer, we see ourselves as being in this business together."

Amadria Park plans to use the information gleaned from the Aruba AirWave Network Management and Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager to develop its loyalty programme. "We can create more insightful profiles of guests, and therefore deliver more relevant personalised services," says Katarina Lilić. "This is at the heart of what a great hotel should be. A home from home experience."



BUILDING 1000, CITYGATE, MAHON, CORK, IRELAND
TEL: +353 21 423 3000 | CONTACT.ARUBA.EMEA@HPE.COM