BOZAR CREATES WORLD-CLASS VISITOR ENGAGEMENTS AND EXPERIENCES WITH ARUBA MOBILE FIRST ARCHITECTURE

BOZAR is the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels. Housed in a seven-storey building, designed by Art Nouveau architect Victor Horta and adjacent to the Royal Palace, it houses art exhibitions, concerts, talks and workshops.

BOZAR owns no artwork. Instead, it hosts a range of cultural engagements. It includes a 2,200 seat concert hall, two smaller theatres and multiple gallery spaces. "Every room was designed on a human scale," says CEO and Artistic Director Paul Dujardin, "and there is very little space for technology."

TAKING AN ART NOUVEAU BUILDING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

BOZAR has enjoyed a period of sustained growth. Ten years ago, annual visitor numbers were around 300,000, while today they are nearer 1.3 million. The challenge is to continue this growth and broaden the audience. BOZAR wants to appeal to a more diverse demographic.

"We are a city in a city," says Dujardin. "We are exclusive in quality, but inclusive in access. BOZAR is for everybody."

Part of this will involve bringing the building into the 21st century, says Francois Pettiaux, BOZAR's Digital Innovation Director. For this to happen, a robust, high-performance network is critical.

"In simple terms we have three user profiles needing a robust network: visitors, staff and clients," he says. "We had inconsistent coverage across the building, and we had to buy in specialist connectivity if there was a major event. If we want BOZAR to succeed we have to embrace the opportunities that technology affords us."

For Pettiaux the challenge was to create consistent coverage across the complicated site with the means to segment access to different users and roles with the appropriate levels of performance and service. Additionally, the installation could not disrupt visitors and had to respect the building's unique architecture.

"We want the best Wi-Fi in Brussels, but I also need separate networks for different purposes," he says. "The building is particularly challenging

REQUIREMENTS

- Enable new and modern ways of engaging visitors of all ages
- New visitor experiences with the launch of an interactive mobile app
- Enhance the mobile services and functionalities offered for media, exhibitors, performers & events
- Modernise but preserve the Art Nouveau building for the 21st century
- Enable digital transformation, including digital wayfinding, content creation and ticketing (soon, in development)
- Simplify secure network access for three profiles of users: visitors, staff and clients
- Ensure network security and GDPR compliance, accommodating 2,000+ users at any time
- Establish the means to gather visitor data, helping inform more targeted and effective marketing

SOLUTION

- 802.11ac Aruba wireless indoor & outdoor APs
- Aruba Mobility Controllers
- Aruba Campus core and access switches
- ClearPass Policy Management for NAC
- AirWave Network Management
- Aruba BLE beacons
- Aruba Meridian Maps, Blue-Dot and Campaigns
- BOZAR mobile app

OUTCOMES

- Provides flexible content management for marketing
- Establishes high-performance wireless coverage throughout complex, seven-storey building
- First-rate connectivity and facilities increase satisfaction all round
- Role-based access ensures security and consistent experience for staff, clients and visitors
- Engaging art experiences with richer and fresh content
- Seamless operations and network data to create insights for future services
- Ensures the flexibility and scale to accommodate continued growth in visitor numbers

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> **FRANCOIS PETTIAUX**
> DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL INNOVATION, BOZAR

to navigate, certainly for first-time visitors. We needed the network to support a new app and digital wayfinding."

The tools to manage a highly-segmented network

The Aruba Mobile First Architecture for BOZAR is comprised of Aruba 3810, 2530 and 2540 Campus switches, 45 Aruba AP-300 series indoor APs and 2 Aruba AP-300 series outdoor APs. The access points are managed by 2 Aruba 7200 mobility controllers which also manage the firewall service per AP. Network security, role-based segmentation and NAC are ensured by Aruba ClearPass for 2,500 staff, clients and guests at any time.

BOZAR has developed a mobile app which is served by the Aruba Meridian platform, delivering mapping, Blue Dot and campaign services for BOZAR's marketing team. The service is enabled via 200 Aruba Bluetooth® Low-Energy [BLE] beacons distributed throughout the BOZAR estate. The app offers wayfinding, content related to the different exhibits, events and activities, audio and video guides, and promotional push notifications. The access points and beacons are hidden from view to respect the visual integrity of the historic building. The network infrastructure is managed and monitored by the Aruba AirWave Network Management platform.
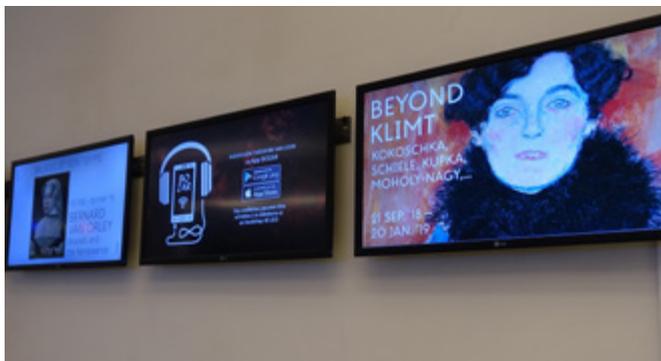
"Aruba had all the right tools," says Pettiaux. "It was able to demonstrate the required security, control and simplified management. It is a robust solution, one that gives me peace of mind."

Aruba BLE beacons enable indoor location and wayfinding, and proximity-aware push notifications. For BOZAR, the ability to customise the placement of beacons ensures a highly engaging customer experience and the flexibility to adapt to different events and exhibition content which is highly appreciated by clients.

An app to enhance the visitor experience

Installed throughout 2018, Pettiaux says BOZAR now has a standard of wireless connectivity unmatched in the city's public spaces. Visitors now connect in seconds and can reconnect seamlessly for one year. The BOZAR app has launched with three key functionalities: "Visitors can see clearly what's taking place that day and for the rest of the week. They can find their way around the building, and we're able to support a full audio and video guide for major exhibitions."

He says initial feedback from users has been excellent. "We want visitors to return again and again. The new app helps create a rich, personalised experience."

He recognises it is early days. The app will add further functionalities over time. Exhibition guides will become more engaging, it will be easier to buy tickets for future events or book a table at one of BOZAR's restaurants. The possibilities are endless. The integration of BOZAR's ticketing and booking systems will indeed be one of the next priorities, allowing Pettiaux and his team to offer an integrated service and seamless experience across the BOZAR website and app.

WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES FOR CLIENTS AND EXHIBITORS

The network also dramatically improves BOZAR as a host, both of exhibitions and for fee-paying clients. BOZAR sells its function rooms to a range of users, from TED Talks in the 2,200-capacity Henry Le Boeuf Hall to private viewings in the galleries. Pettiaux can now create dedicated access for event organisers.

"We are a business and this facility is expected by clients. We want to provide clients and exhibitors the necessary services they need to create the best events," says Pettiaux.

This meets the BOZAR aim of being relevant in the 21st century and appealing to younger generations. The Aruba network will allow BOZAR to support new digital artforms, virtual reality, IoT devices or artificial intelligence. It creates a more dynamic environment, with the potential of attracting a more diverse audience.

"The only way we can do this is by continuing to innovate," says Dujardin. "BOZAR should be a place where art, science and technology and artificial intelligence co-exist."

Digital workflows to create operational efficiency

From an operational perspective, the Aruba network will lead to process efficiencies. A new website is planned for 2019, along with changes to the app to allow purchases. These changes will unify the way users engage with BOZAR digitally.

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This should make it easier for BOZAR to sell tickets for future events, raising revenues and creating new ways of working with commercial partners. In addition, staff will be able to work from a range of connected devices throughout the site, from ticket scanning to point of sale devices.

Taking BOZAR to the world

Pettiaux says there is an opportunity to transform BOZAR into a world-class content studio for the art world. The Aruba network is already supporting content creators – photographers can upload heavy data files within seconds, audio and visual crews can connect and operate equipment throughout the building.

"We host more than 1,000 events each year," he says. "We have a real opportunity to maximise content around our events."

Dujardin says the long term challenge is to extend BOZAR beyond Brussels, beyond its physical environment:

"Brussels is not London, New York or Paris. We can't hope for the same visitor numbers, but we can grow, and we can match the quality of the best in the world. For me, the live experience will always be the priority, but we have an opportunity through digital to engage with a much wider, more diverse audience.

"What we're doing in this building can be experienced by anyone in the world. That is our mission."