Swisslos is one of Switzerland’s two not-for-profit lottery providers. It focuses on the German and Italian speaking parts of the country. Money raised is spent on social, art, sport and community projects.

Around 20% of revenues come from online sales, but the business retains a strong, physical retail presence. Swisslos has 6,000 points of sale (PoS), including restaurants, kiosks, newsagents and post offices. “We want to be a lot more active at PoS,” says Joris Vuffray, head of network and system management, Swisslos. “We want to bring some of the immediacy and ease of use of online.”

ALIGNING IT WITH BUSINESS NEEDS

Since the year 1993, Swisslos have transformed its PoS locations from traditionally static kiosks to internet-connected outlets. At the core of its values is customer satisfaction and consequently, being able to have efficient product lifecycle management is a critical driver for Swisslos. In order to respond to the needs of the marketing teams for deploying ever-changing services to customers, the Swisslos network had reached the limits of its performance and flexibility.

TAKING CONTROL OF POS CONNECTIVITY

Swisslos own 6,000 PoS locations which were connected and run as a managed service. They were looking for a fresh approach as its existing solution was proving to be too costly, change was slow and often at the expense of other services. Also, it did not deliver the required performance for increasing internet connectivity. Swisslos wanted to add new services to these locations, including bets on horse racing and event video streaming, but needed to do so quickly and cost effectively with no compromise on security.

“ It’s plug-and-play. If we have a 3G connection, we can create a new PoS, and we can configure it in minutes. Compared to the previous connectivity, this is a huge cost win. It could save us a huge amount of money.”

Joris Vuffray
Head of Network and System Management, Swisslos

Video streaming and multi-casting is a very important requirement for Swisslos. In its previous solutions this was either impossible or prohibitively expensive. With the Aruba solution, this is fully possible and under the control of the Swisslos team.

To date, 3,500 PoS have been connected to the Swisslos data centre. These were previously connected using a VPN from one of Switzerland’s service providers with discrete network components. Vuffray says the situation was untenable. Costs were too high, new installations took too long, and Swisslos was unable to take control of its own connectivity: “We were effectively outsourcing...”
the connections. If we were going to introduce new services we needed full control, and the ability to do so quickly."

At this stage, Vuffray admits he knew Aruba only as a supplier of Wi-Fi access points: "It was only when we started to see the amount of retail references Aruba could provide that we realised we needed to think again."

Vuffray quickly set up a Proof of Concept, emphasising the importance of a zero touch deployment. "With every other vendor there was always one or two elements missing from its solution. It was clear from the beginning that we could get everything we needed with Aruba."

Central control with secure device management
The Aruba solution is to deploy Remote APs (RAPs) in all 3,500 PoS, with Aruba ClearPass to manage all connections and AirWave to deploy all the configurations. The RAPs are connected to Aruba Mobility Controllers in the data centre. In-built security and the effectiveness of how security policies are defined and deployed were key benefits for Swisslos.

The Aruba RAPs establish an SSL/IPSec tunnel to connect to a central controller and enable network access for users. All Aruba RAPs can be factory-shipped to a local site, and include download configurations from a central controller for a zero-touch experience. Aruba ClearPass has a built-in profiling engine that collects real-time data including device categories, vendors and OS versions.

Swisslos is now able to exercise full visibility and control over its connections. Rogue devices and access points are always a risk. It is able to monitor and control this, limiting access only to those devices which comply with its access policies.

"It’s plug-and-play," says Vuffray. "If we have a 3G connection we can create a new PoS, and we can configure it in minutes. Commercially, you get the same functionality in a small Aruba RAP as you would in alternative competitive solutions. Compared to the previous connectivity, this is a considerable cost win. It could save us millions of Swiss Francs which we can reinvest in social projects and improving our services."

The internal Swisslos IP telephony system is also running on this network and ClearPass is used for managing authentication and access management.

The simplicity of zero-touch deployment
Zero-touch remote deployment was very important to Swisslos. Vuffray, with a team of just two network administrators, says he couldn’t contemplate a roll-out of this scale without such ease of management. The roll-out started in summer 2016 and it is expected to be complete by September 2017.

It’s been bulletproof," says Vuffray. "No issues."

Such has been the ease of deployment, Swisslos has even installed temporary PoS at sporting events, including the Spengler Cup ice hockey in Davos and ski races in Wengen and Adelboden. "These would not have been easy locations to connect. With the Aruba RAPs and a 3G USB stick we’re online in minutes," he says.

A PLATFORM FOR SERVICE INNOVATION
The improved connectivity is allowing Swisslos to add new services. Betting on horse racing is currently available at 150 PoS, the plan is to expand this. Vuffray wants to add self-service functionality to PoS, allowing customers to order through tablets. PoS will install video display screens. He calls this PoS 2.0. Greater engagement and a better customer experience, the thinking goes, will drive higher revenues.

"Now we know exactly what’s happening on the network and at each PoS. With ClearPass we can identify any device on the network, and set role-based access. For instance, a service technician can connect a work device, but an unauthorised device can’t. It’s a huge win in security terms."

Granular analytics to drive meaningful customer engagement
Long-term, the aim is to connect the remaining 2,500 PoS. Vuffray also plans to use Aruba AirWave to generate usage reports. The goal, he says, is a business that can bring new services to market quickly, and have the means to monitor customer engagement.

"Analytics is a very important aspect. We know Aruba has solutions in those areas," Vuffray concludes. "The better we understand our customers, the better we’ll become at creating the services they want."