

CASE STUDY

WITH ARUBA, 35,000 PEOPLE ENJOY SIMULTANEOUS WI-FI ACCESS AT EUROPE'S LARGEST CONVENTION CENTRE IN PARIS



To host international events catering for up to 35,000 people in the city, Viparis needed to become Europe's largest conference centre.

"For the past two years, we have been constructing a new space, the Paris Convention Centre, in the world's largest city-centre exhibition area, located at the Porte de Versailles in Paris. Thanks to outstanding Wi-Fi, this space will be able to host corporate events and provide innovative services," added Thierry Vaneycke, CTO, Viparis.

AN OUTSTANDING SOLUTION FOR A DEMANDING AUDIENCE

All of Europe's cities are competing to attract large conventions of up to 35,000 participants. Viparis, which operates 10 event venues in the Ile-de-France region, responded to this challenge by opening the Paris Convention Centre at the end of 2017. The venue is suitable for conferences, exhibitions and events, and is notable for its plenary room which can seat 5,200 people. "Everyone attending an event here has access to high-speed internet for their professional and personal needs and for the new services provided by Viparis," underlines Thierry Vaneycke.

To meet these goals, Viparis turned to hardware and software solutions from Aruba, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company.



OBJECTIVES

- Enable the City of Paris to host large international events
- Develop a business travel ecosystem in Paris
- Provide reliable Wi-Fi access to 35,000 people at the same time
- Offer 5,200 concurrent internet connections during plenary sessions with guaranteed minimum 2 Mbps
- Enable smartphone services such as simultaneous translation or content injection
- Analyse heatmaps to determine crowd movement using smartphone geolocation services

SOLUTIONS

- Aruba Wireless APs – indoor and outdoor
- Aruba Mobility Controllers
- Aruba Analytics and Location Engine (ALE)
- Aruba Switches

OUTCOMES

- Aruba Wi-Fi access points remain stable despite radio interference
- Wi-Fi quality is perceived very positively by delegates
- Wi-Fi hotspots can be configured easily by event organisers
- Outstanding Wi-Fi performance enabling Viparis to win international contracts

“ Aruba was the only company to come up with a solution to install access points at ground level thereby responding to the building's architectural requirements and which had the necessary flexibility to handle events of various sizes. ”

THIERRY VANEYCKE
DIRECTEUR TECHNIQUE, VIPARIS

Ground-level access points for a glass roof

The Paris Convention Centre is a modular space integrated into a four-storey building and designed to host large-scale international conventions. Its third-floor plenary room has been configured to seat up to 5,200 people in Europe's largest plenary space.

"The plenary room has a saw-tooth glass roof. For architectural reasons, it was impossible to install Wi-Fi access points on this surface. Aruba's floor-level access points provided the ideal solution," says Thierry Vaneycke. Moreover, given that the seating in this room may vary by

as much as 100%, the design of these access points not only allow consistent, high-density coverage in this space but also provide scalability and flexibility for different room configurations. For this reason, Viparis chose Aruba after issuing a call for tenders.

Respecting environmental standards

To address the many needs of the site, Viparis' CTO and his team, assisted by the integrator OPENEvents, installed a complete Aruba solution comprising 287 AP-325 and AP-324 access points run by four 7200 series mobility controllers as well as incorporating Aruba 5412R and 2540 campus core and edge switches. Around 70 of the access points are removable and have been integrated into the furnishings, while the rest are fixed.



These removable access points, which have been placed under delegate seating, should allow the plenary room to be used for around ten large-scale events per year at a rate of one access point per 80 participants. To reassure the public, wireless Wi-Fi emissions here are 100 times lower than environmental standards, "which will be certified through the Bureau Veritas organisation," adds Thierry Vaneycke. In addition, the entire architecture has been validated by HPE.

INNOVATIVE SERVICES

Thanks to high quality Wi-Fi connections and a 2 x 10 Gbits/s bandwidth, Viparis can introduce multiple innovative services with high added value. The first of these is a smartphone-based simultaneous translation service. By simply downloading an app from Linguali, delegates will have access to the expertise of a human translator.

Aruba's Analytics and Location Engine will enable Viparis to use smartphone geolocation services to generate motion "heatmaps" and statistics in order to analyse the movements of delegates and visitors over the course of the day.

Finally, Thierry Vaneycke and his team are working on content injection for smartphone screens, which could include full-screen ads, information about the day's event, quality questionnaires or even a "click and collect" food ordering service.

Attracting 54 conferences in five years

If the objective was to give Paris a fantastic opportunity to transform itself into the world's leading conference provider, then it achieved this goal in 2016 according to the ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association). But in fact, the ambition is even greater than that. Over the course of the next five years, Viparis wants to attract 54 conferences to the venue, 2/3 of which are international.

Thanks to the Wi-Fi infrastructure in place at the Paris Convention Centre, "We have already managed to secure around fifteen events, the majority being from the medical sector, such as the French Rheumatology Congress or the ICL, which focuses on liver diseases and is taking place in Paris for the first time," says Thierry Vaneycke.

The choice of Aruba technology solutions has helped to make all of this possible. Since its formation in 2010, Aruba has reduced all aspects of its carbon footprint, particularly in the design and application of its equipment.

This makes the Paris Convention Centre a highly technological event space which also promotes biodiversity with its fourth-floor landscaped garden. This should certainly appeal to the next generation of delegates.

