

ZyXEL



ZyXEL helps Bovey Castle deliver a first-class service



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Paul Downing, reservations manager at Bovey Castle

Overview

Challenges:

- Offer secure wireless Internet access to guests and staff
- Install a wireless network with minimum disruption to clients and castle buildings

Benefits:

- Superior customer service and competitive edge, as guests can surf the Internet from their rooms for no extra cost
- Reinforces Bovey Castle’s position as one of the UK’s top five star hotels
- Extremely secure network, so guests can rest assured that no sensitive data on their laptops can be accessed by any one else
- Remote monitoring by Hotel Broadband enables rapid identification and resolution of any problems on the network
- ZyXEL’s VDSL products deliver high bandwidth without the need for a separate network
- Increased brand awareness for the hotel, as guests are directed to the Bovey Castle portal when they log onto the network
- Installed in under one week with no disruption to guests

ZyXEL solution:

- ZyAIR 3000 wireless access points
- ZyXEL 2024 managed Dimension switches
- ZyXEL’s VDSL products: three pairs of P841s and P841c
- Remote monitoring from Hotel Broadband
- Mains and Power over Ethernet (PoE) extend network access in areas without power outlets

Bovey Castle

Since it opened in April 2004, Bovey Castle has been at the forefront of standards and style. In 2005, the castle became the first hotel in the South West of England to receive a five-star rating from the AA and RAC Hotel Guides in more than 50 years. High aesthetic standards have helped to achieve this and also led to a wide range of VIP and celebrity clientele staying at the hotel.

More people now expect to be able to access the Internet from their hotel room – even if they are on holiday and not on a work trip. Bovey Castle recognised that this was a key demand, but before extending this service to customers, it wanted to ensure that any implementation offered the utmost security for its clientele. It was also important that the installation was discreet and understated in keeping with the hotel’s image.



Meeting challenges of aesthetics and security

The previous year, Bovey Castle had worked with Hotel Broadband, a leading provider of high speed Internet solutions, to deliver Internet access to the castle's conference rooms. Given the success of the implementation, Bovey Castle turned to the same provider to install a wireless infrastructure throughout the hotel. Hotel Broadband chose to use ZyXEL's networking products for the implementation because of the company's excellent security features and comprehensive wireless access points, which addressed the two key challenges the castle faced in delivering Internet access: aesthetics and security.

The castle was a little concerned about providing enough bandwidth capacity to accommodate up to 130 people accessing the Internet at any one time. It also needed to ensure that its VIP clientele's security was watertight and was a little worried that sensitive data opened across a wireless network could be intercepted.

"While we understood the Internet was an expected necessity, certain factors had to be considered before we could go ahead with any installation," explains Paul Downing, reservations manager at Bovey Castle. "Our main concern was the security aspect. The hotel plays host to very important clients who would be opening emails containing extremely sensitive data and it was, therefore, crucial we had a fully secure system in place to prevent any possible hacking."



ZyXEL minimises disruption and maximises security

The solution proposed by Hotel Broadband was a range of ZyXEL products including the ZyAIR 3000 wireless access points with comprehensive security features, such as 802.1x authentication, 256-bit WEP encryption and WPA. The hotel also installed three ZyXEL 2024 managed Dimension switches, which isolate access points on the network. As security features can be programmed specifically for current residents, both the hotel and its clientele can rest assured that sensitive data on their personal computers cannot be accessed by anyone else using the wireless network internally or externally.

In addition, remote monitoring by Hotel Broadband on the health of all access points – using a custom developed guest service gateway – gives the hotel further reassurance, as it can pinpoint and resolve immediately any problems on the network.

In addition to its security concerns, the aesthetics of the implementation was also a key consideration for Bovey Castle. In keeping with its 1920s ethos, the castle forbids the use of mobile phones in any public leisure areas and decided to follow the same rule for laptops, limiting wireless access to bedrooms and the conference areas only.

As the castle is a listed building, the wires associated with a standard network installation posed a problem because it would distort the castle's 1920s surroundings. Drilling holes in the walls was not permitted, the castle having recently undergone a £20 million refurbishment, and also because of the risk from asbestos in the loft and basement areas. Installing a wireless network was the obvious solution to avoid any wiring. The ZyXEL products are also hidden from public view, ensuring that the aesthetics are in keeping with the hotel's wishes.

A further complication to uninterrupted Internet use was the Castle's location: in 368 square miles of the isolated Dartmoor Broads. To ensure uninterrupted coverage, Hotel Broadband installed ZyXEL's VDSL (high speed DSL) products as well, including three pairs of P841s and P841cs. The advantage of these technologies is that they can use the hotel's existing telephone lines, thereby removing the need for additional wiring and delivering high bandwidth at the same time.

A combination of wireless and VDSL products ensures full network coverage throughout Bovey Castle, its conference blocks and staff accommodation. Using a combination of mains and Power over Ethernet (PoE) to power the devices has also allowed for installation in areas without access to power outlets, such as the attic.



Bovey Castle delivers first-class customer service

The considerate nature of the wireless installation and careful planning of Hotel Broadband meant that the solution was installed in under one week with no disruption to guests. The castle's management decided to extend coverage to staff quarters as an added staff benefit, which has received very positive feedback. In addition, as Hotel Broadband's gateway takes guests to a fully customised Bovey Castle portal when they connect their laptop to the wireless network, the castle has been able to raise its brand awareness, helping it thrive in the world of hospitality.

"The wireless implementation, which we decided to offer at no extra charge to our guests, has really made a difference to the hotel's service and has helped us maintain our position as one of the UK's top five-star hotels. By offering this as a free added extra for staff also allowed us to kill two birds with one stone. We are extremely pleased with ZyXEL's products and feel confident that we can now offer our guests and staff a secure and speedy Internet service that can be accessed at their leisure," concludes Downing.



About ZyXEL Communications

ZyXEL Communications Corp. (TSE: 2391), headquartered in Hsinchu, Taiwan, is the world's leading residential gateway provider and was recently ranked as Taiwan's First "Green Enterprise," and the second best "Green" Company in Asia (2007 CG watch, Asian Corporate Governance Association). ZyXEL's comprehensive Internet Protocol-based (IP) networking solutions include access multiplexers, customer premise equipment, Internet security and Wireless LAN equipment, enabling high-performance network services for SOHO, small to mid-sized businesses and service providers. ZyXEL works closely with worldwide network equipment vendors, telecommunications companies, ISPs, and other major businesses. For more information, visit the company's website at <http://www.zyxel.com>