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RUCKUS enables Schoenen Torfs to build central and easy to manage Wi-Fi network in 75 stores

Schoenen Torfs is a household name in Belgium. The family business was founded in October 1948, and currently has more than 75 stores. Since 2006, Torfs has consistently been one of the best employers in Belgium, and for years the company has been voted Best Retailer in Belgium within the shoe Industry. Torfs is progressive and leading in digital strategy and customer focus. More than 700 employees work in the stores and at the head office in Sint-Niklaas.

Customer
Schoenen Torfs

Country
Belgium

Requirements

- Full unburdening when it comes to the Wi-Fi network
- Central management from a single point
- Full coverage, high capacity and network speed
- Simple, fast deployment and onboarding of access points
- Future-oriented solution: continuous refreshment and expansion

Solution

- Full Wi-Fi network in over 75 store locations for customers and back office

- Cloud Wi-Fi centralized management through the central cloud portal
- Delivery of over 300 RUCKUS access points
- Use of BeamFlex+ technology for maximum reach, high speed and large capacity

Benefits

- Very fast and efficient roll out within five weeks across 75 stores
- Simple central management
- Unburdening of IT department
- Carrying out everything in-house
- High customer and employee satisfaction

"RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi has enormous value add for us"

Schoenen Torfs decided to replace the existing Wi-Fi network in all of its 75 stores. IT partner VanRoey.be was asked to source a new connectivity network that was more stable and powerful than the existing system, and that could also generate information about customer movements in the long term. "We also wanted a centrally managed system in the cloud," says Raf de Leu, IT Manager at Schoenen Torfs. "No longer dependent on individual controllers, easy to roll out and full unburdening." After an extensive test period and careful consideration, Torfs opted for RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi and access points (APs).

> "It was very important to us that the Wi-Fi networks were easy to manage, always stable and quickly rolled out in all of our 75+ stores. With just one click, we can now see where the access point is, and we can easily onboard a new access point ourselves. That was the reason why we chose VanRoey and RUCKUS".

Raf de Leu
IT Manager Schoenen Torfs

Wi-Fi is extremely important when it comes to the digital infrastructure in Torfs' stores. The mobile scanners for inventory and stock management and many other devices are connected to the back-office systems over the wireless network. Moreover, since 2012, Torfs has been the most customer-friendly shoe retailer in Belgium and offers free Wi-Fi in-store.

The challenge

The existing Wi-Fi structure in Torfs' stores was outdated. In terms of capacity, stability, and ease of use, the organization wanted to make improvements to their entire connectivity. "Each store is renovated every five years, we tackle 15 to 20 stores per year and then the misery begins. Where were those access points located exactly, where is the documentation, how do we install them in the new setting? We wanted to move to a much more user-friendly, centralized cloud system to reduce waste time on complex set-ups, or continuously rely on the expertise of external experts for installation and configuration. Furthermore, the coverage and capacity of the existing networks were insufficient. Employees were sometimes confronted with a faltering connection and customers in the store were occasionally unable to connect to the Wi-Fi. We wanted to change that. Therefore, we wanted to replace our existing solution with something that could grow with us and cater for analytics such as footfall and heat maps," states Raf de Leu.

The solution

Based on Torfs' wishes, VanRoey. be soon landed at RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi. "I was extremely impressed by the RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi platform. It looked good, seemed simple and is continuously being developed and expanded. It keeps getting more extensive and better," comments Raf de Leu.

For De Leu, the main benefits of RUCKUS' Cloud Wi-Fi were: "Easy to manage and easy to roll out. With one click we can see where each access point is located, we can upload floor plans of the stores, and very easily add and onboard access points. To us, this cloud portal has great added value. It gives us great insights and is easy to use, as we can manage everything from one central cloud platform and via the RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi app. For example, we can remotely check the network speed and have real-time insights in the

usage and other useful analytics. As an addition, RUCKUS offers more interesting functionalities we can implement to the cloud in the future."

RUCKUS Cloud Wi-Fi followed an extensive Proof of Concept test phase for six months. Hans van Ballaer of VanRoey.be says, "We started by fully kitting out a single store and performed various tests to see how the Wi-Fi signal behaves: to what extent does a shoe rack in the store absorb the signal, are there differences in storage space? This painted a good picture of various arrangements and situations. We wanted to be certain that the system would still function well after a few months. And it did."

The roll-out to other stores commenced and within five weeks the entire roll-out of all stores was complete. "The roll-out was more of a logistical operation than a technical issue. On the one hand, this was due to the fact that Hans produced the designs for the installation of each individual store's Wi-Fi network. On the other hand, it was because of the simple installation of the RUCKUS system. Due to the Cloud Wi-Fi app, installations of

the APs are particularly easy as pre-staging can be done via this mobile app. The only thing we needed to do was call in an electrician who could lay the cables and place the APs following Hans' plans. Connecting and adding an AP to the cloud portal happens therefore almost automatically." Now, if a store is being renovated, adaptation of the network can be quickly arranged, without relying on the expertise of external experts.

The RUCKUS APs were chosen. They have a compact design and offer a connection capacity of up to 100 clients simultaneously. For the customers' wireless connection in the stores, a number of security measures were taken so the corporate network was shielded from customers and illegal websites were blocked. Torfs has built a redundant firewall layer in each store, so that control over network use remains possible at that level.

The result

"The advantage of choosing RUCKUS is also the strength of the Wi-Fi signal," said De Leu. "We notice that the signal has a wide range compared to other existing brands. This was a striking difference

for me, and it meant that we needed fewer APs than we initially estimated. The entire solution is also very distinctively stable. You won't notice that you're roaming, for example."

De Leu was also very enthusiastic about the service and support offered by VanRoey.be and RUCKUS. "Any questions or disruptions were immediately addressed. This customer focus was certainly a reason for me to choose RUCKUS. I was guaranteed that any malfunctions would be resolved as quickly as possible, and this promise was entirely fulfilled. That is very valuable to me.

"We see other retail chains looking at Torfs when it comes to approaching technology issues. How quick was the roll-out, how easy is it to control Wi-Fi in so many locations, how self-reliant is Torfs, how stable, powerful, and versatile is the RUCKUS network in its entirety; other companies and industries want to follow suit," Concludes Van Ballaer.

About RUCKUS Networks

RUCKUS Networks builds and delivers purpose-driven networks that perform in the demanding environments of the industries we serve. Together with our network of trusted go-to-market partners, we empower our customers to deliver exceptional experiences to the guests, students, residents, citizens and employees who count on them.

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