

DR PEPPER BALLPARK

Ruckus Provides Champion-Caliber Wired and Wireless Network



CASE STUDY



OVERVIEW

Dr Pepper Ballpark is home to the Frisco RoughRiders, the Double-A affiliate of the Texas Rangers. Located in Frisco, Texas, the ballpark is designed with old-fashioned architecture to give it a regal flare and serves 10,316 fans at any given event.

REQUIREMENTS

- Seamless, high speed Wi-Fi Internet service for fans
- Reliable network that meets the high density needs of users
- Simple to install and easy to manage

SOLUTION

- Deployed Ruckus' ICX switches as a high-speed backbone around the entire ballpark
- Deployed indoor and outdoor Ruckus access points
- Deployed 2 virtual SmartZone (vSZ) controllers for redundancy

BENEFITS

- Seamless roaming throughout the ballpark
- Fast, reliable Wi-Fi that supports high density
- Easy to manage
- Elevated the fan experience and engagement at the ballpark

DR PEPPER BALLPARK AMPLIFIES THE FAN EXPERIENCE WITH WI-FI

Baseball is a popular sport that used to consist of having some popcorn and soda, while root, root, rooting for your favorite team. Although this is still the case, the ultimate fan experience has changed since the “good ol’ days.”

With the explosion of mobile devices, guests today expect to be constantly connected to the Internet, regardless of where they are located in the ballpark. Fans want to share their experiences online via social media, photos, emails, texts and video streaming, and teams want to communicate with their fans in real time. Vendors also want to use the Internet to capitalize on revenue during games by providing services, such as point-of-sale transactions in strategic locations in the park.

FAN-FOCUSED BALLPARK WITHOUT WI-FI

It's hard to imagine going to a ballpark without an Internet connection these days, which is why Texas-based Dr Pepper Ballpark decided to make big improvements, adding Wi-Fi that would blanket the ballpark by Opening Day of the 2017 season.

Dr Pepper Ballpark is home to the Frisco RoughRiders, the Double-A affiliate of the Texas Rangers. The beautiful ballpark is designed with old-fashioned architecture to give it a regal flare, but also includes modern features such as the world's largest water feature in a professional sports stadium—the Choctaw Lazy River in right field—where fans can take a dip under the hot Texas sun while cheering on their team. The ballpark offers other great amenities, including the Skinny IT Tech Tavern where fans can watch the game in an air-conditioned suite while enjoying good food, soft drinks, beer and wine.

Although the ballpark included all these fan-focused features, up until late March 2017, Dr Pepper Ballpark did not offer the one service a modern fan expects—Wi-Fi Internet access.

“The RoughRiders team prides itself on creating an experience that rivals the major-league ballparks as much as possible. The goal is to have the fans leave the ballpark with an amazing experience and not care if the team won or lost,” said Kevin Lofgren, Chief Marketing Officer, Skinny IT.

CHALLENGE

It is no simple task to design a seamless, high-speed Wi-Fi Internet service for fans to use anywhere in the ballpark. This is especially difficult when a facility, such as Dr Pepper Ballpark, is built with no Wi-Fi service in mind. Even more, the team only had three weeks before opening day to build the Wi-Fi system.

The ballpark has a large, open-air space to cover and is surrounded by offices, apartments and hotels that all have their own Wi-Fi signals that can interfere with a fan's experience. “The solution needed to be an integrated, highly reliable architecture that could be customized to provide the best fan

DR PEPPER BALLPARK

Ruckus Provides Champion-Caliber Wired and Wireless Network

CASE STUDY

experience possible while being easy to install and simple to manage and maintain,” states Chad Atchley, Vice President of Solution Development, at Skinny IT.

With all these issues facing the ballpark, Dr Pepper Ballpark turned to its partner Skinny IT and Ruckus for its solution.

SOLUTION

After an extensive evaluation of Ruckus, HPE Aruba and Cisco options, Ruckus emerged as the clear winner because of its integrated wired and wireless networking options, centralized Ruckus SmartZone™ management platform, and virtual Smart Positioning Technology (vSPoT™) location-based services and analytics.

“We were able to establish a redundant fiber optic network using ICX® switches as a high-speed backbone around the entire ballpark for our Wi-Fi services. The ICX platform offered an easy-to-manage design with the right port density for our needs. However, the real benefit was with the Ruckus access points (APs). Ruckus’ wireless technology and reliability allowed us to design the solution with 20 percent fewer APs than the competition, which translated into an easier-to-deploy project, fewer devices to manage and maintain, and a lower cost to Dr Pepper Ballpark,” said Atchley. “Without Ruckus, we would not have been able to deploy a turn-key solution in record time.



“Our experience with Ruckus has been wonderful. We’ve had every square inch of this ballpark blanketed in Wi-Fi but we also have wired connections that are extremely fast as well. We are proud to partner with Ruckus.”

MATT RATLIFF

Frisco RoughRiders, VP of Marketing

At the core of this solution, Skinny IT built a high speed, core-to-edge network using the ICX switch platform. This enabled broadband Internet traffic to be distributed across the ballpark at speeds of up to 40Gbps over a redundant fiber optic network and the ability to scale the solution to support more fans or to add new features and services in the future.

To deliver Wi-Fi connectivity to every seat, suite, restaurant and store within Dr Pepper Ballpark, Skinny IT deployed 85 Ruckus APs throughout the park. The AP and antenna selections were specifically designed to cover the ballpark. Shaped antennas cover long walkways and seating areas while omnidirectional antennas provide 360-degree coverage in areas like seating sections and suites. The high capacity of the Ruckus Wi-Fi technology was able to cover all areas within the ballpark and support the sellout crowds at RoughRiders games or other ballpark events.

The solution also required creative placement of APs. The ballpark is the “crown jewel” of minor league baseball parks across the country due to its style and fan engagement. When it was designed, placement of Wi-Fi APs was not a key consideration. As such, Skinny IT had to find creative ways of installing the Ruckus APs within the facility where they would not obstruct the fans view, or take away from the aesthetics of the ballpark, while providing the required coverage. Fans who look closely in eaves, utility poles or even under their seats may be able to spot some of this technology.

In addition to providing the design and installation of the Wi-Fi solution for Dr Pepper Ballpark, Skinny IT also provides administration and support for the solution. Using a pair of redundant SmartZone controllers, Skinny IT is able to monitor the health of the architecture, maintain consistent configurations across all APs, and troubleshoot issues within the solution. This tool helps ensure the Dr Pepper Ballpark Wi-Fi delivers an excellent end-user experience while simplifying workflows and keeping Skinny IT’s support costs low.

Finally, Skinny IT provides Dr Pepper Ballpark valuable analytical data regarding fan activities while they are in the ballpark using Ruckus’ advanced beaconing vSPoT technology. This data can be used, along with Skinny IT’s analytics engine, to highlight fan congestion areas, such as long lines at concession areas and demographic data from fans that log-in through the Wi-Fi services. This combined solution allows the team to gain marketing insights they can use to reach their fan base more effectively.

“With Ruckus, we now have a fast, strong and seamless network at the ballpark. Working with Ruckus’ products and team have made for a perfect solution,” concluded Lofgren.

Copyright © 2018 Ruckus Networks, an ARRIS company. All rights reserved. No part of this content may be reproduced in any form or by any means or used to make any derivative work (such as translation, transformation, or adaptation) without written permission from Ruckus Networks (“Ruckus”). Ruckus reserves the right to revise or change this content from time to time without obligation on the part of Ruckus to provide notification of such revision or change.

The Ruckus, Ruckus Wireless, Ruckus logo, Big Dog design, BeamFlex, ChannelFly, Edgelron, Fastron, HyperEdge, ICX, IronPoint, OPENG, and Xclaim and trademarks are registered in the U.S. and other countries. Ruckus Networks, Dynamic PSK, MediaFlex, FlexMaster, Simply Better Wireless, SmartCast, SmartCell, SmartMesh, SpeedFlex, Unleashed, and ZoneDirector are Ruckus trademarks worldwide. Other names and brands mentioned in these materials may be claimed as the property of others.

Ruckus provides this content without warranty of any kind, implied or expressed, including, but not limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Ruckus may make improvements or changes in the products or services described in this content at any time. The capabilities, system requirements and/or compatibility with third-party products described herein are subject to change without notice.



350 West Java Dr., Sunnyvale, CA 94089 USA

www.ruckusnetworks.com