

DRUIDS GLEN

Ruckus Connects Guests with Best-in-class Wi-Fi,
to Ensure a Reliable and Fast Connection



CASE STUDY

DRUIDS  GLEN
HOTEL & GOLF RESORT



OVERVIEW

Druids Glen needed to improve its wireless connectivity to deliver five-star Wi-Fi to its guests. The hotel also needed a reliable Wi-Fi backbone to enable investment in new technologies that support its staff and make their jobs easier, and also give guests access to state-of-the-art facilities that make their stay more enjoyable.

REQUIREMENTS

- Access Points that can mitigate interference issues caused by building materials
- Powerful APs that can cover the 17,000 sq metres of property
- Secure connections that support business conferences with ease-of-mind

SOLUTION

- Zone Director 1200
- 2 x R700 Access Points
- 4 x R300 Access Points
- 10 x H500 Access Points
- 49 x R500 Access Points

BENEFITS

- Ease of integration into existing infrastructure
- Ease of configuration from the controller
- Enterprise-grade security
- Clients are prevented from being able to see other client activity, which is particularly important for business customers
- Staff can use Wi-Fi phones throughout the building without dropping calls or inhibiting network connectivity, meaning they can help guests anywhere
- Enabled the hotel to embrace technology across all aspects of the business

BRINGING 5-STAR WI-FI TO A 5-STAR RESORT

Hotels are diversifying their offerings to remain competitive and serve broader audiences. From catering to weddings, conferences, meetings, sports, spas as well as typical leisure guests, hotels can thrive with multiple lines of business, however this also brings increased demands on the Wi-Fi infrastructure, with each audience type comprising different needs and expectations. Hotels must accommodate a range of different visitors simultaneously, all with different technological needs. What happens if your business guests can't access their presentations, or your leisure guests can't stream their favourite TV shows? They'll tell you about it at the front desk, you'll see it in your reviews and, ultimately, you'll feel it in your bookings.

COVERAGE CHALLENGES

Many hotels are built with pre-fabricated rooms which are often lined with environmentally-friendly material. However, this can cause serious network interference challenges, as these materials can block or disrupt Wi-Fi signals within the building. Druids Glen, a luxury resort set over 368 acres of countryside just outside of Dublin, Ireland was facing this challenge. With consistent signal required across all bedrooms and business conference areas (for up to 250 max), two golf courses, as well as a spa, health club and wedding venue they needed superior technology which could provide great coverage in a challenging environment.

The success of the hotel's diversification strategy means they are close to capacity throughout the week, but the existing network couldn't provide consistent coverage, especially where building materials had created a physical challenge to strong Wi-Fi signal. "Our market is all markets. We need to make sure our Wi-Fi can support the enterprise as well as the leisure customer", said Andrew Prior, Director of Finance and IT, "our connectivity was sporadic."

The impact on the hotel was clear, with Market Metrics (the hotel's satisfaction survey) consistently flagging internet range speed and connectivity as one of the top 10 problems. The signal was not consistently reaching across the rooms, leading to patchy connectivity. Druids Glen needed to find a balance between hardware and coverage. "We didn't want to add too many access points because it runs the risk of increased interference," explained Prior.

The incumbent Cisco network wasn't providing the hotel with the solution they or their guests needed. "We had to change, there were no two ways about it," said Prior, adding, "we're a five-star resort, we can't operate with second class kit."



“We have not had a single complaint since Ruckus has been installed in the hotel, I can’t imagine another company would do it as seamlessly. The team were patient and provided a five-star service and we haven’t had to worry about the Wi-Fi since we chose Ruckus.”

ANDREW PRIOR
Director of Finance
Druids Glen

With potentially hundreds of guests trying to connect to the network at one time, all expecting a reliable and fast connection, the logistical challenges of ensuring good Wi-Fi access can be overwhelming, especially for hotels such as Druids Glen which have limited IT resources, “we’re an IT team of one person—it’s me,” explains Prior. However, travellers still expect the same connectivity levels in their hotel rooms that they have at home or in the office. If hotels can achieve this, they can access the lucrative business events industry. Druids Glen couldn’t meet, or exceed, the basic needs of a business conference environment with a poor Wi-Fi network. The challenge was all about coverage. With guests and staff covering a large site, the handover from one access point to another had to be seamless.

SOLUTION

Looking for a solution to meet Druids Glen’s requirements, several providers were evaluated. “We did a lot of testing and the Ruckus solution was able to provide connectivity without any complexity, it was plug and play,” he explained.

Coverage was the priority, for any guest connecting on any device to be unencumbered throughout the whole network. The solution had to meet the basic needs of connectivity, while also allowing Wi-Fi to become a business opportunity. Druids Glen chose Ruckus for its first-class service and attention to detail, which was “exceptional.” “We want to wow the customer, and the Ruckus pre-sales service certainly wowed us,” commented Andrew. “The entire process was significantly cleaner than with our previous supplier,” said Prior, “the pre-sales and post-sales support has been first class.” Within a week, they had the solution installed.

Ease of configuration with many VLANs and the ability for access points to broadcast up to 16 SSIDs (especially for conference areas) made Ruckus the clear choice. The ability to separate networks out was also a major factor. Superior technology gave the speed, range and consistency that Druids Glen needed for superior coverage. A combination of R700, R300, H500 and R500 access points and ZoneDirector 1200 controllers gave all the range and performance needed, as well as the ability to configure every access point based on grouping.

Just 55 APs cover the hotel’s 17,000 square metres, and the network has the capacity to support 500 users (staff devices and guests) on the system at once with no problems. “Every nook and cranny is covered by the least possible number of access points operating at the highest speed that our network will allow,” explains Prior. There are no barriers to traffic flow, even with the increased number of SSIDs which Druids Glen is now able to broadcast. Additionally, Ruckus’ BeamFlex Adaptive Antenna technology optimises and boosts performance, meaning better and more reliable service across the hotel, by adjusting signals to steer around interference.

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RESULTS

“Since Ruckus, we’ve had compliments about our internet access,” states Prior, “but most importantly, not one complaint.” Ruckus technology has allowed Druids Glen to offer Wi-Fi that matches the quality of its facilities, and exceed guest expectations.

Aside from coverage, Prior listed three clear benefits of bringing Ruckus technology to Druids Glen; “ease of integration into existing infrastructure, ease of configuration from the controller and enterprise-grade security.” Clients are prevented from being able to see other client activity, which is particularly important for business customers, and staff can use Wi-Fi phones throughout the building without dropping calls or inhibiting network connectivity, meaning they can help guests anywhere.

The new Wi-Fi has enabled the hotel to embrace technology across all aspects of the business. For example, Druids Glen recently implemented Serviator, which gives every housekeeper a tablet to immediately notify the supervisor when a bedroom is marked as ready for a new guest, giving a real-time record of hotel rooms for staff at the front desk, checking in customers who arrive early.

Prior summarised: “We have not had a single complaint since Ruckus has been installed in the hotel, I can’t imagine another company would do it as well as Ruckus does. The team was patient and provided a five-star service. We haven’t had to worry about the Wi-Fi since we implemented Ruckus. It hasn’t failed us once.”