



Hanson Enterprises

Hotel Guest Satisfaction Increases With Robust Xirrus Wi-Fi



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David Hanson,
Hanson Enterprises

People planning vacations consider Wi-Fi when choosing where to stay. They like to check email, Skype with friends and family back home, update their Facebook pages, and stream video. Some vacationers need to keep up with work.

Hanson Enterprises owns and manages three popular hotels in the town of Ogonquit, Maine, a beach resort and artist colony. These hotels—The Milestone, Gorges Grant Hotel, and Juniper Hill Inn—are among some three-dozen Ogonquit hotels and inns that compete for guests, company meetings, and private receptions.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Guest satisfaction increased, an advantage for repeat business and positive online reviews
- Guests who stream video don't slow down the experience for other guests
- The network will last many years. Access points do not need to be replaced because a simple software update converts radios to a new band.

Today's Guests Expect More From Hotel Wi-Fi

The three hotels already provided free Wi-Fi. But the aging network couldn't keep up with new guest habits. For example, it's become common for a vacationing family to bring five or six devices, including laptops, tablets, smartphones, and gaming consoles for the kids. As a result, the hotel's Wi-Fi network sometimes out of connections, disappointing guests. Worse, the network stopped working entirely if the central controller failed. Hanson's administrators, who are not necessarily IT experts, didn't have the tools to quickly identify and correct the problem. All of this affected the guest experience and customer satisfaction scores.

Goal: "Set It and Forget It"

Hanson Enterprises decided to look for a new Wi-Fi network. "We wanted a 'set it and forget it' product that could be centrally managed and last for many years," says David Hanson, a company partner. The new network had to be reliable, robust, and able to grow as guests started bringing even more wireless devices and streaming more video. "We don't have an IT department, so we needed a network that would not require a large time investment from staff," Hanson says. And to keep costs down, the company wanted a solution that wouldn't require new access points as guests started using newer devices that operate in the 5GHz spectrum instead of the 2.4GHz spectrum.

“Before, we felt like we were just barely keeping up with the demand for Wi-Fi from our guests. With Xirrus, we’ve made a leap forward and gotten ahead of the game with a system we can rely on for many years. Network performance meets our guests’ high expectations, and we spend very little time on network maintenance.”

David Hanson,
Hanson Enterprises

Great Performance, Higher Guest Satisfaction

The company found the solution in a Xirrus Wi-Fi network. Guests can connect from guest rooms, the lobby, dining areas, and outdoor pool areas.

“Since installing Xirrus, we haven’t had any complaints from guests about the quality of the Wi-Fi, because the Wi-Fi really just works,” says Hanson. “That’s exactly what we wanted.” Higher customer satisfaction gives Hanson Enterprises a competitive advantage. Guests are more likely to return and to post favorable reviews on online travel forums.

Simple Management

Hansen Enterprise administrators monitor the network using the Xirrus Management System (XMS). They receive an alert before the network reaches full capacity so that they can take action to ensure that guests maintain their connections.

For example, soon after the solution went in, administrators saw that streaming video consumed a large portion of total network capacity. Performance slowed for everyone—including guests who weren’t streaming video. Just a few clicks in XMS limited bandwidth to 2 Mbps per device, and now streaming video no longer slows performance for other guests.

Ready for the Future

Over time more guests will connect with newer devices that operate on the 5GHz spectrum. When that time arrives, Hanson Enterprises won’t have to purchase new access points. That’s because Xirrus access points are modular and future-proof. One radio can operate on the 5GHz spectrum while the other operates at 2.4GHz, to support older devices. Later, Hanson can make a simple software change to operate both radios at 5GHz.



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