

Wi-Fi Enabled Optimization of Event Management



Hospitality venue owners and operators are now appreciating the value of delivering reliable Wi-Fi connectivity to their customers. While Wi-Fi access is not a requirement, it is quickly becoming an expectation among customers. This shift in perception from Wi-Fi as a luxury to Wi-Fi as a utility, and the resulting investments in Wi-Fi owned solutions, has unearthed new ways the technology can be a business asset. Among these benefits is a venue's ability to leverage Wi-Fi to reduce costs, optimize onsite event management, as well as support, streamline, and ultimately optimize event processes.

Critical Business and Technology Issues

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

In addition to delivering premium connectivity and granular analytics, effective Wi-Fi solutions should also improve a business' operational efficiency and reduce costs. Venue IT teams are often short staffed, but are still required to fully support the network during critical events and quickly troubleshoot when outages occur. So the most effective and efficient Wi-Fi solutions leverage a common infrastructure and employs an end-to-end solution for both wired and wireless technologies controlled from a single management platform. This end-to-end model and 'single pane of glass' simplifies network operations and reduces the overhead costs of employing an entire IT team for network support and maintenance. When these integrated wired and wireless networks include the ability to dynamically provision, manage policies, and provide visibility and control into each connected device, a venue can significantly reduce the number of IT personnel required to administer the network and the turnaround time for troubleshooting network issues or potential security breaches.

STREAMLINED POINT OF SALE FUNCTION

Streamlining the point of sale (POS) function is a critical component of event management, especially for events that heavily rely on onsite purchases as a source of revenue. A purpose built and highly reliable Wi-Fi solution supports the POS function by increasing the flexibility of checkout solutions, reducing the transaction time for customers, and generally

creating a more well-organized event flow. By understanding location-based analytics captured from the Wi-Fi network, organizations are able to ensure connectivity is available at key areas of an event where attendee traffic flow is high, such as entrances and exits. Event staff operating POS devices are not restricted to more traditional and stationary POS setups; they can be mobilized, a strategy that streamlines the specific needs of an event. This is especially useful if a venue hosts multiple events that require differentiated POS needs. Wi-Fi access points purposely placed at POS locations enable event attendees to access their mobile ticket on their device upon entering an event. Lastly, with the emergence of alternative mobile payment options, such as a mobile e-commerce application with an attached credit card reader, Wi-Fi will play an even larger role in supporting POS for event management moving forward.

IMPROVED TICKETING

Venues that require attendees to purchase tickets to gain admittance greatly benefit from a high-density Wi-Fi solution. Selling tickets can be a much more fluid and personalized experience with the help of a Wi-Fi enabled device. Ticket scanners are more effective with internet access for barcode validation. While connecting scanners through a hard wire port from a computer is possible, this setup can be limiting. A purpose built Wi-Fi system that considers and designs to the traffic flow of event entrances creates and allocates the necessary bandwidth to support these systems. Not only is gaining admittance to an event more hassle free for the customer, it also saves operating costs by alleviating the hard costs of printing tickets and physical ticketing booths, and the soft costs of handling ticket transactions.

ENHANCED NETWORK AND PHYSICAL SECURITY

It goes without saying that network security—ensuring that all private data cannot be accessed by unauthorized parties—must be a feature of every Wi-Fi solution. However, strong Wi-Fi connectivity also enhances the onsite physical security of an event. Venues rely on security systems and sensor technology to deliver a smooth and safe event. As more and more of these systems become Wi-Fi enabled and even Wi-Fi dependent,

networks must support these connected devices. If one should break, the venue IT staff requires visibility into the connected appliance to identify the problem and take the appropriate steps to fix or replace the device quickly.

Regardless of any precautions a venue may proactively implement to ensure the safety of its patrons, there is always a possibility of an emergency, and that means that all lines of communication must be functioning and uncongested. Even with a DAS system designed to support cellular functions installed, the bandwidth produced from mobile activity in heavily populated areas is often taxing. In the event of an emergency, a Wi-Fi solution ensures all communication channels (mobile or otherwise) are operational. Only a robust Wi-Fi network will improve cellular function as well as support bandwidth consumption in these environments.

PRIORITIZED NETWORK ACCESS

Often events must support specialized groups onsite with secure Wi-Fi connectivity and a more prioritized level of access to the network. Take sporting events, for example: in order to fulfill their onsite responsibilities, press require reliable and secure access to Wi-Fi connectivity. Furthermore, when authenticating to the network press also require prioritized bandwidth and ability to use applications that may be blocked to public facing,

guest Wi-Fi.

ONSITE WI-FI SUPPORT

As simple as it sounds, one of the primary issues deploying a high-density Wi-Fi solution is the lack of awareness that it's available for use, or the 'human layer' of the network. Roaming technology experts that act as mobile IT helpdesks, also known as Wi-Fi Coaches, help customers authenticate and access a public facing network proactively, and following up on any reported issues. More onsite support and coaching makes for an overall better event experience for customers. Not only does Wi-Fi Coaching provide a personal touch point for the organization's brand, it also provides an additional layer of customer feedback so an organization understands if their network is supporting the event in exactly the way it should be.

This table describes how hospitality venues are able to successfully tackle the challenges of their organization and the demands of their costumers cited above, using Extreme's purpose-built solutions and differentiated services.

HOSPITALITY SOLUTION GUIDES

- [High-Density Wi-Fi for Hospitality Venues](#)
- [Customer Engagement Activation Monitization](#)

REQUIRED CAPABILITIES	RECOMMENDED SOLUTION	HOW WE DO IT BETTER
Operational Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExtremeControl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy-based, end to end network controls from single management platform • Seamless authentication of customer devices with layer 7 visibility and control of entire network
Streamlined POS & Improved Ticketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExtremeWireless • ExtremeControl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose-built Wi-Fi technology for secure and reliable connectivity in high density settings • Bandwidth prioritization to mission critical devices • Wi-Fi mesh capability: flexible Wi-Fi deployment options for difficult to wire locations
Enhanced Network and Physical Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExtremeWireless • ExtremeControl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wi-Fi architecture to maximize coverage • Visibility and control of every connected device • Location-based network intelligence • Built-in wireless IPS radar for security, as well as detection and mitigation of interferences
Prioritized Network Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExtremeWireless • ExtremeControl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automated and policy-based network provisioning for tailored user privileges and bandwidth prioritization upon gaining network access
Onsite Wi-Fi Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme Wi-Fi Coach Program • Extreme Networks Customer Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established and trademarked mobile Wi-Fi Coach Program • All in sourced GTAC support service • 95% first call resolution rate



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