



Hyatt Regency Osaka Deploys Hotel-Wide Wireless VoIP System: New System Rivals Wired Dial-Tone Quality

Hyatt faced two problems that required a solution. First, Internet access from guest rooms needed to be improved from the slow dial-up only access. Second, Hotel staff needed a better communication device than the pocket pagers they had been carrying. Initially, Hyatt considered installing a wired broadband service to each room and installing a Handy System (PHS) for its hotel staff. Deploying two independent solutions, however, was not economically feasible.



Challenge

The Hyatt Osaka wanted to provide the guests and employees of its 28-floor 500-room luxury hotel with ubiquitous, state-of-the-art wireless services, including toll-quality wireless VoIP.

Solution

- Meru Wireless LAN System, including: AP200s and Controllers to cover 28 floors
- Multiple applications supported on single infrastructure: wireless broadband access for guests, wireless VoIP for employees with SIP phones, and PDAs with hotel service applications

Benefits

- Eliminating co-channel interference and coordinating all traffic on the network saves the Hyatt significant time and cost that would otherwise be required for RF planning
- Meru's Virtual Cell Technology enables Hyatt's employees to roam throughout the hotel without ever dropping a call
- Meru's over-the-air Quality of Service (QoS) ensures high quality voice and data service to all Wi-Fi clients on a single infrastructure, eliminating the need for Hyatt to deploy and manage two separate networks

In Search of a First Class Wireless Solution

The Hyatt Regency Osaka, a luxurious 500-room facility on Cosmo Square in Osaka's new business center, faced two legacy IT issues. First, Internet access from guest rooms needed to be upgraded from the slow dial-up to broadband access. Second, the hotel staff needed a better platform for internal communications than the pocket pagers they had been carrying. Initially, the hotel considered installing wired broadband service to each room and a PHS system for its hotel staff. However, the cost for deploying two independent solutions would have cost over YEN 1M.

At the suggestion of its solutions providers, Nissho Electronics and Hitachi Infonet, Hyatt decided to test the Meru WLAN System. They quickly discovered that Meru could address both of its business requirements by delivering a single wireless infrastructure that served dual-purposes: provide its guests with high-speed Internet access and enable its staff to work more efficiently by equipping them with a real-time voice and data communications system. Specifically, the Meru WLAN system offered the following unique capabilities:

- Complete coverage with fewer APs: The Hyatt consists of two sublevel floors and twenty eight above-ground floors with 500 guest rooms. The entire area was covered with 150 APs. With other WLAN systems, at least twice that numbers of APs would have been needed for full coverage. The Meru WLAN System's Controller manages APs globally to minimize contention, thereby reducing the number of APs needed to provide ubiquitous coverage. This also minimized installation and wiring costs.

- Wireless QoS: For the Hyatt, wireless telephony was the driving application for the WLAN deployment. Meru's over-the-air quality of service enabled Hyatt to deploy a wireless IP telephony system that matched the quality of its wired voice system.
- Seamless handoff between APs: With Meru's virtual AP feature, it was possible for the hotel's mobile employees to always remain connected.

Voice and Data Become One

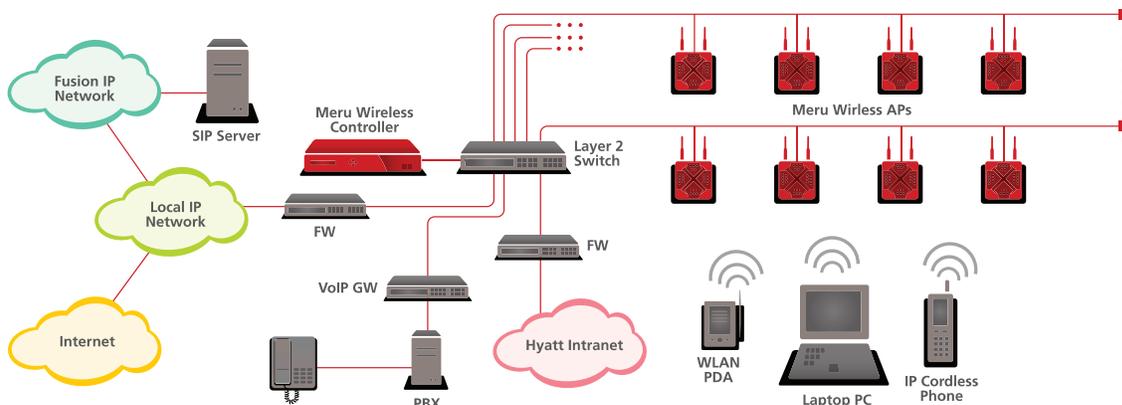
Hyatt deployed the Meru WLAN system to support IP voice and data services throughout its 28-floor building. Over 100 Hitachi Cable SIP-based Wireless IP (WIP5000) phones have already been deployed, with landline-quality VoIP service provided by Fusion Communications, a Japanese IP Centrex service provider.

Plans are underway to have a wireless phone in every employee's hand. The system also supports wireless soft phones and workflow management applications over wireless PDAs. This will enable the staff to access the Hotel's intranet for up-to-the-moment event information to provide timely assistance to guests.

Other plans include a wireless check-out system using PDAs to enable the hotel staff to access real-time data (e.g., check which rooms are available for cleaning without having to call the front desk each time) as well as a scheduling system for managing services and facilities for large group events. Eventually, Hyatt plans to bundle its wireless VoIP and wireless Internet services into a single package.

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A single Meru WLAN infrastructure supports voice and data at the Hyatt Osaka Regency Hotel.

Wireless VoIP Delivers Immediate Business Impact

In a demanding environment where service disruptions and poor performance directly affect efficiency as well as customer satisfaction, the impact of the Meru WLAN system on the Hyatt's overall operations and services was immediate.

Similarly, the wireless system has been a big hit with guests who can now access the Internet from the hotel's lobbies, conference center, meeting rooms, and guest rooms. As a highly-regarded upscale city resort, the Hyatt Osaka must lead the market by providing the most advanced communications services—such as wireless Internet access and VoIP telephony—for its guest and employees.

The WLAN system has even created new business opportunities. According to General Manager Kenichiro Yokoyama, the wireless VOIP service has enabled the hotel to have improved the hotel's bottom line and opened up new business opportunities for the future. Providing wireless Internet services for the hotel's conferences alone has the potential for generating several hundred million yen in revenues.

Altogether, the Meru WLAN at Hyatt Osaka has had a definite and positive impact on improving the level of service that hotel staff can offer and strategically, this has improved Hyatt's competitive position.



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