

“Hotel Wi-Fi creates measurable increase in positive online reviews”

The Best Western Academy Plaza hotel, located close to O’Connell street in Dublin is one of the few hotels who saw Wi-Fi as a critical service since as far back as 2003.

“If you have a service interruption, hotels can manage without water or power but not Wi-Fi!” said hotel manager, Peter Collins. Their management team created a strategy to ensure their guests always enjoy a quality Wi-Fi experience.

“Our Wi-Fi equipment is always replaced before it becomes 5 years old,” confirmed Peter and for years, they have upgraded a fifth of the network annually.

In spite of this careful ongoing maintenance programme, Wi-Fi capacity and security were growing concerns for the Best Western hotel. They took painstaking steps to implement a controlled pilot in 2015 however the solution tested didn’t make the grade.

“We carried out a small scale pilot on the head-end. That system couldn’t cope with our Wi-Fi traffic volumes,” reported Peter. “It was back to the drawing board to find a new provider.”

The Best Western team researched the options extensively, after which they rolled out a ProWinet secure Wi-Fi solution from www.prowinet.com in May 2016 and saw immediate benefits.

“We were looking for a solid, working backbone. The ProWinet Wi-Fi solution had the capacity to meet our demands. This meant users were consistently getting excellent connection quality and speed - fast enough for all tasks, streaming, Skype calls, email and browsing. We also got coverage in former blind spots for the first time and have started to get some compliments from guests on the consistency of the service.”

The benefits for this Best Western Hotel include better visibility and faster response times. “We can now see the system health at a quick glance. The “traffic light” control panel shows if all systems are go. If we need to change settings or refresh, we know exactly where to go - no need to worry if it was a system issue or a device issue like before.”

The service immediately created a net increase in positive online reviews. “In the first 2 months, we saw an increase in positive reviews of our hotel, with no increase in negative reviews. The Wi-Fi is the only thing we changed in that time.”

As a 300-bedroom hotel with significant tour operator

clientele, reviews are a core metric for the Best Western hotel. “Every hotel is different. For some hotels, repeat business is the goal. For us it’s all about referral business. That increase in positive online reviews will directly help our business.”

Peters’ team also chose the ProWinet solution for its strong security features. “The wireless knowledge delivered by the ProWinet team is excellent and for us, guest security is paramount. Hacking is already a concern for corporate users and it’s going to be a bigger concern for all users as time goes on. It’s nice to know we’ve ticked that box and that we are very well covered”.

He also confirmed the ProWinet quotation process was simple and easy to navigate, without unnecessary technical jargon. “The pricing was fair and easy to understand. We now better manage the kit we already had and complimented it with a correctly set up and managed system maximising ROI.”

The rollout was also pain free. Peter describes ProWinet staff as professional and courteous and the installation as seamless. “They came in every hour as needed, even overnight.”

In order to prevent disruption to guests, ProWinet kept Wi-Fi live in the lobby, public areas and conference rooms at all times. Where new equipment was introduced the transfer took just a few minutes.

While it’s clear the Wi-Fi investment will pay for itself relatively fast, the Best Western team also see the benefit of the powerful Wi-Fi analytics data from the ProWinet cloud application.

“We can now see that we have approximately 7,000 new users monthly with daily usage of between 700 and 800. We simply didn’t have these statistics until ProWinet Wi-Fi was installed.”

Peter also confirmed he hoped to use the information captured at login to profile users for marketing purposes. “We can send targeted messages. Prior to this we only had information for the registered lead guest and no contact information for tours and groups. Now we have contact details for all users that register regardless of information captured at traditional front desk check-in.”

The Best Western team are also considering a custom landing page for users after they log in, for upselling and providing guest information. Peter shared, “It could be anything from Cocktail of the week to future booking offers.” *Cocktail with free Wi-Fi, anyone..?*