

Case Study: Le Parker Meridien

Samsung Wireless Enterprise - Helping Hotels Build Loyalty by Giving Guests Great Wi-Fi



LE PARKERMERIDIENNEWYORK

Overview

Wi-Fi has become a necessity in the hotel industry. Aside from location, the most important amenity for most hotel guests is reliable and fast in-room Wi-Fi. Le Parker Meridien, a luxury hotel located in the heart of Manhattan, sought to upgrade not only the in-room Wi-Fi, but also Wi-Fi connectivity in the restaurants, spa, and conference rooms. While the hotel IT staff evaluated numerous vendors, they ultimately chose gear from Samsung Wireless Enterprise. The hotel IT director, John Yu, says he is confident that the new network will meet the hotel's connectivity needs for years to come, and they liked that it was expressly designed to work seamlessly with other electronics like the Samsung hospitality TV's in most guest rooms.

SAMSUNG
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LE PARKER MERIDIEN NEW YORK

Opened in 1984, Le Parker Meridien Hotel is proud to be one of the preeminent hotels in New York City.

Located in midtown Manhattan, Le Parker Meridien is a showcase hotel of the Meridien brand of Starwood Hotels. With 729 rooms and 12 meeting rooms, the 4-star hotel offers its guests a luxury retreat with four restaurants, six beauty and hair services, a swimming pool and gym spread across its 41 floors.

Playing host to guests and dignitaries from all over the world, the art deco hotel has rooms overlooking New York's famed Central Park and Fifth Avenue.



The Customer Need: A New Network Strong Enough to Handle All Their Guests' Needs

While access to a stable and secure Wi-Fi network used to be considered a luxury amenity in hotels, in today's tech-driven society, it's more of a standard requirement. According to a global survey from Hotels.com, Wi-Fi is the most requested in-room amenity. In fact, access to a wireless network ranked as the third most desired amenity after complimentary breakfast and an attached restaurant.¹

Le Parker Meridien's original Wi-Fi network was installed in 2004. While cutting edge at the time, the network was showing its age. The speed had dropped substantially. Cross-signals from neighboring networks caused major interference. And the original manufacturer had ceased releasing patches and updates.

What Le Parker Meridien needed was a new network that could handle the speed and load capacity of their tech savvy clientele. Plus, they needed a system that

protected their guests from network vulnerabilities.

"At any given time, we have 800-1400 devices running on our network," said John Yu, Director of Management Systems for Le Parker Meridien. "But during our peak evening hours we typically have over 2000 devices connected to the network simultaneously. Families come in and every kid has their own iPad. That's a lot of different devices and a lot of connections."

With an average of 700 rooms occupied per night plus a variable number of other guests in and out of the hotel at any given time, the Le Parker Meridien needed a state-of-art wireless network that could handle both guest demand in rooms, coverage in the meeting rooms and hotel lobby, as well as the hotel's systems.

¹ <http://press.hotels.com/en-us/news-releases/travelers-rank-complimentary-breakfast-and-free-wi-fi-as-the-most-valuable-hotel-amenities-in-global-survey/>

The Samsung Solution: A Samsung Network Installed by the Hotel's IT Staff

After looking at products from various vendors, Le Parker Meridien got a recommendation from an unlikely source.

"All of our TVs are 46" inch Samsung LED TVs and we've had a lot of good experience with them," Yu said. "It was our TV guy who suggested we look at Samsung for our new wireless network."

To test the strength of the system, Samsung installed 8 access points on one floor of the Manhattan hotel and hosted them for 2-3 months off a Samsung WEC 8500 WLAN controller in Dallas. The test drive proved that the equipment could handle the traffic at the speed Yu and his staff required.

Seeing how robust the Samsung network was both in terms of speed and capacity, Le Parker Meridien decided to proceed with a full network deployment and ordered all the equipment from long-time Samsung partner Sophos Technologies. The IT staff will eventually install 360 412i access points throughout the

41-floor hotel, all hosted by one central Samsung WEC8500 WLAN controller.

"The install was not difficult," Yu explained. "With the help of Samsung Senior Technical Support Engineer Ashish Bhatia, my team including Mohamed Dagdag, Brian Dundi and Victor Gil handled the installation."

"Planning was critical to the success of the project. When we renovated a few years ago, we planned for a network upgrade so we had already run all the wires. It was just a matter of putting the access points up on the ceilings and connecting them to the ports," Yu added.

Quick Profile:

SAMSUNG WEC8500 ACCESS POINT CONTROLLER



Number of Clients: 20,000

VLANS: 1024

Max Number of APS: 1,000

Features: Firewall and Encryption

SAMSUNG WEA412I ACCESS POINT



802.11ac – 2x2 MIMO

Delivers data rate of up to 867 Mbps

Samsung AirMove technology ensures seamless handover among APs

Self-organizing network (SON) allows high level of quality management and reduces design cost



The Results:

A Future-Proof Network That Created a One Samsung Solution

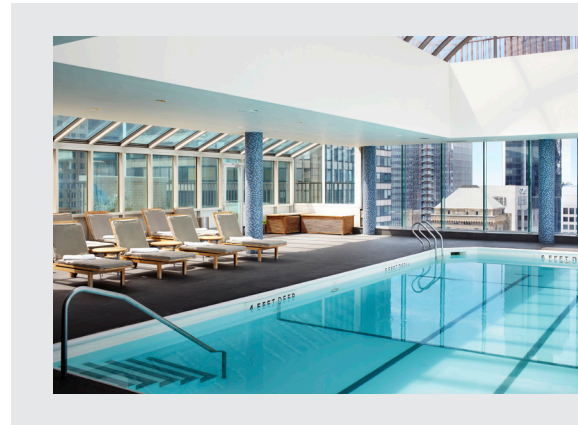
Investing in a new wireless network was something Le Parker Meridien did because they believe in providing their guests the best hospitality experience possible. A network that is hassle-free and stable is an important part of creating that positive experience.

Le Parker Meridien tested the Samsung network against other products and found that it matched or surpassed the competition. The solution was competitively priced so the hotel moved forward. Today the Le Parker Meridien network is faster than ever (running a base speed of 15 Mbps) and can handle a much heavier data load. The hotel plans to add another 60 access points soon, ensuring that their network is one that will be able to handle anything for a long time.

“We used to have difficulty providing a quality network experience when we hosted gaming or movie companies because of their VPN, static IP, speed and coverage needs,” Yu said. “But our new access points are robust enough to take care of these issues.”

In addition to the hardware, there’s more behind the Samsung deployment that made it a success. Samsung tech support assisted the hotel’s IT team, answering any questions and walking them through problems. Plus, the programming was straight forward and easy to push out. The release of patches and upgrades also makes the network more efficient and safer for any devices logged in. All of these facets of the deployment, plus the hotel’s insight and planning, have ensured that the new network will be future-proof for years to come.

For Le Parker Meridien, with Samsung TVs installed in every room, the choice of Samsung products continued their evolution into a One Samsung solution. “Our entire IT team uses Samsung phones, too, and we’re really happy with them,” Yu said. “But we didn’t pick Samsung out of brand loyalty. In the end, we picked Samsung because it delivered.”



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