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Haymarket Media Group Creates Mobile Foundation with Aerohive Networks

Global publishing house enables mobile workforce with business-grade Wi-Fi across two continents

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James Marshall
Infrastructure & Comms Manager,
Haymarket Publishing

About Haymarket Media Group

Managing 75 brands in 27 offices across nine divisions in eight countries, including What Car?, Stuff and Brand Republic, Haymarket Media Group is a truly worldwide media business. While Haymarket is intensely proud of its print heritage, its digital businesses are also thriving, along with its customer publishing agency, live events, awards and exhibitions.

Haymarket has around 2000 staff spread across five continents, 1500 of which are located in the UK and US.

Challenge

Operating in a distributed enterprise environment, and with an increasingly mobile-savvy workforce, Haymarket faced heightened demand from employees for using smart devices in the workplace. Recognising that a high performance wireless network was critical to enabling mobile productivity, the IT team looked to reduce its dependence on its legacy wired network and implement a flexible, business grade WLAN to support the secure adoption of smart devices as well as guest access across its offices.

“We wanted to be in a position where we could provide corporate-owned smartphones and tablets to our staff as well as meet the demand from employees who wanted to bring their own devices into work,” said

James Marshall, Infrastructure & Comms Manager at Haymarket.

“We knew a standardised and company-wide wireless infrastructure was the first step to achieving this, but we wanted to do it properly. It was imperative the solution we chose was suitable for our distributed environment; easy to implement, manage and scale to all of our offices in the UK and US.”

Having conducted a thorough evaluation of the marketplace, and trialling solutions from Aruba, Meraki and Aerohive, Haymarket found the scalability and centralised management afforded by Aerohive’s controller-less approach best suited its needs.

Solution

With consultancy and guidance from trusted IT partner Evolve, Haymarket chose Aerohive for its business-grade WLAN and was particularly impressed by its guest profiling capabilities and ability to cost effectively scale with the company’s needs.

Marshall commented, “During the Aerohive trial we found that, although some vendors’ features were similar, Aerohive was a far more mature technology. The controller-less aspect was a key factor; it meant we didn’t have the added cost of buying additional controllers. The APs just meshed themselves, which was great both in terms of cost, resiliency and ease of management.”

Haymarket Media Group

case study



With Aerohive's cooperative control architecture the intelligence is in the Access Points (APs) themselves, rather than a central controller. This means the APs enforce powerful and flexible identity-based security, access control, and quality-of-service (QoS) policies at the edge of the Haymarket network.

"Enabling guest access was key for us and Aerohive's strong guest settings allowed us to do this securely which, in a business environment like ours where people are always in and out visiting the office for meetings, was a real deal breaker," added Marshall.

Aerohive APs were first deployed throughout the largest of Haymarket's UK offices in Teddington, shortly followed by the remaining seven UK offices. Following the success of the UK deployment the team quickly began rolling out the solution to its centres in the US. Haymarket also implemented Aerohive's HiveManager Network Management System (HiveManager) to enable centralised management and control of its estate, from one office location.

Marshall explained: "Aerohive's simple configuration and functionality enabled us to easily and cost effectively roll out wireless to each and every location, along with the option to add further APs as and when we need them. Using HiveManager, the team and myself simply set configuration, adjust settings and implementation policies all from one central location in the UK and we're off!"

"HiveManager's Client Health application also gives us full 'at-a-glance' visibility of the entire network via a traffic light system, meaning we can quickly drill down to assist any staff members or guests with connectivity issues."

Results



Supporting laptops, tablets and smart phones across multiple operating systems, the Aerohive WLAN now acts as the foundation for the company's growing mobile estate.

"Having the Aerohive solution in place is enabling us to support over 550 mobile devices and laptops across our network throughout the UK and US. As more employees increasingly bring their own devices into the office, we have peace of mind that the Aerohive WLAN has the intelligence and resilience to cope with whatever traffic is thrown at it."

With the network successfully providing connectivity across two continents, the ease of deployment and scalability of the APs also came to the fore during the 2012 London Olympics where it proved essential to the company's disaster recovery plans. As the event's official publisher, Haymarket was producing daily schedules and programmes published via mobile apps during the games.

"To deliver the LOGOC contract it required additional team resource at Haymarket's Teddington office, with a dedicated section of Hammersmith set aside as an emergency centre for failover," Marshall explained. "Aerohive was critical to this, as although there were a number of PCs and wired connections set up in Hammersmith, the majority of staff were working via laptops so we simply used Aerohive to create a 'pop-up' network. Without the need for purchasing additional controllers, hardware or any complex

configurations, a number of APs were simply purchased, configured and deployed to create a back-up network we could rely on for the duration of the Olympic contract."

Going forward, Haymarket is also looking to implement Aerohive BR200 routers to provide secure wireless access from its live events and exhibitions, as well as to enable senior executives to work from home without depending on unreliable home Wi-Fi solutions.

Marshall concludes: "A major part of our work as a media company is events, we want to enable secure wireless access for our events teams on the move. Having run some initial testing, the Aerohive BR200s are great for this. We just pre-configure them in-house and the teams can just simply pick one up and take it with them for secure and reliable network access anywhere. We can't wait to try it out at our forthcoming agricultural event, Cereals, this summer wireless in a field!"

