

Hotel and care home: Full-coverage Wi-Fi delights hotel guests and residents alike

Laetitia care facilities and eduCARE Hotel establish the prerequisites for digitalisation in long-term care and hotel operations

Customer

Laetitia
Pflegeheime

eduCARE
HOTEL • RESTAURANT • SEMINAR

Country

Austria



Overview:

The eduCARE seminar hotel and Laetitia care facilities in the Austrian state of Carinthia combine hotel and long-term care offerings in a joint concept. As one of the largest accessible hotels in Europe, eduCARE offers 150 beds and eight flexible seminar rooms for business travellers. Almost 200 residents can be accommodated in the three buildings of the Laetitia care facilities. A high-performance wireless local area network is able to meet the connectivity needs of the hotel guests as well as the care-facility residents.

Needs:

- Implementation of a comprehensive, full-coverage network solution free for all to use
- Establishment of separate networks of different bandwidths for various user groups
- Stable infrastructure to enable simultaneous access by high numbers of users
- Flexible solution allowing set-up of short-term Wi-Fi networks for workshops and seminars

- Complete, powerful Wi-Fi coverage of the care facilities to meet mandatory documentation requirements
- Reliable Wi-Fi coverage despite the rural location

Solution:

- Installation of 20 indoor 802.11ac wireless access points (AP) on the hotel grounds and a total of 39 access points in the three care-facility buildings
- Implementation of an expandable and flexible network solution that can grow and keep pace with the business's future needs

Benefits:

- Positive feedback from the hotel guests in terms of Wi-Fi quality
- Availability of dedicated Wi-Fis for workshops as an additional service
- Wi-Fi as the basis for digitalised care and thereby enhancing the attractiveness of job roles in long-term care
- Simplifying work processes and increasing the productivity of staff
- The Internet access enables residents and visitors of the Laetitia care facilities to keep in touch and remain part of society

"We don't get any more complaints whatsoever about the Wi-Fi. In this case, no feedback is the best feedback! Our Internet rating at booking.com has also risen from 8.0 to 9.2 since we've implemented the new system."

Andreas Buchacher
Managing Director of eduCARE and Laetitia Care Facilities

Nowadays many people consider access to Wi-Fi to be a basic need almost anywhere they go: airports, tourist attractions, restaurants, cafes, bars and hotels. Yet when it comes to equipping long-term care facilities with wireless technology, there's still a lot of catching up to do. For senior citizens, access to broadband connections means being able to keep in touch with loved ones and see what's going on in the world. It increases the quality of life of the elderly. Not only the care-facility residents but also the facility itself benefit from the Wi-Fi: implementing Wi-Fi solutions in care facilities plays a decisive role in effectively digitalising long-term care. Given the shortage of skilled, qualified staff in the healthcare sector, digital technologies can make the long-term care profession not only run more efficiently but also make it a more appealing profession.

Needs

The eduCARE seminar hotel in the town of Treffen on Lake Ossiach in the southern Austrian state of Carinthia has year-round capacity for 150 guests and also provides venue spaces for seminars and workshops. While a large share of the hotel's guests are business travellers hailing from the Carinthian region, guests from Germany stay there as well. The hotel is fully accessible to persons with disabilities and counts among the largest hotels of its kind not only in Austria but anywhere in Europe. In addition, the hotel grounds are home to three buildings housing Laetitia long-term care facilities that were opened over 20 years ago, and are operated jointly with the hotel as an owner-managed enterprise.



Implementing a comprehensive, full-coverage Wi-Fi solution across all these premises establishes a reliable infrastructure that optimises not only internal business operations but also workshops and seminars hosted by the facility. Another important goal was to meet the demand among Laetitia residents for broadband Internet connection. A seamless full-coverage wireless solution is also needed to meet Austria's national statutory requirements for direct on-site care documentation. This new Wi-Fi technology should lay the groundwork for digitalising the facility's long-term care operations.

"The aim of this project was to find a solution that works throughout the entire complex without any complicated login process. The system needed to combine various components such as our restaurant's points of sale, guest Wi-Fi, the facility's internal Wi-Fi, as well as networks for seminars and workshops," explains Andreas Buchacher, Managing Director of the eduCARE hotel and Laetitia care facilities.

Technology from CommScope powered by Ruckus technology met these needs completely. Staff, guests and facility residents can connect to the network without access code anywhere throughout the complex, indoors or outdoors. This was a key condition in order to meet the mandatory requirements for on-site care documentation directly where the services are provided. We needed to have multiple, separate networks of differing bandwidths and security clearances, as well as have the flexibility of being able to set up new short-term Wi-Fi networks for seminars.

Solution

As the previous network system had proven to be out of date and susceptible to disturbances and malfunction, eduCARE made the decision to install a new network solution. Owing to their longstanding business relations and experience with eduCARE, the experts at ELBE GmbH were contracted to plan and implement a new wireless solution. Apart from the flexibility of the Ruckus technology and the short timeframe needed for installation, ensuring business operations are interrupted as little as possible, it was the hardware's performance and reliability that proved most convincing. While ELBE GmbH initially considered lower-priced providers as well, only Ruckus technology was considered up to the task in the end. "We want to offer our customers the best technological products. Ruckus was the only choice. What was also crucial to our final decision were the good reference projects in major cities and the fact that breakdowns are kept to an absolute minimum," explains Gerd Schwanter, Managing Director of ELBE GmbH, about opting for Ruckus.

The first phase of the project was implemented in 2016 on the hotel premises. After expanding the network and equipping the three Laetitia care facilities, the final expansion phase saw the installation of some 59 ZoneFlex R510 access points around the entire complex. Twenty of these access points serve the eduCARE seminar hotel and the outdoor areas, while a total of 39 access points provide Wi-Fi to the long-term care facilities, with 13 access points per building. With dual-band support (2.4 GHz/5 GHz), the

indoor access points ensure reliable, high-performance 802.11ac wireless networks. These networks are managed from a virtual SmartZone (vSZ) controller hosted at ELBE GmbH. This technology covers an area totalling some 14,000 m², including the outdoor spaces. Anywhere from 100 to 150 hotel guests on average use the Wi-Fi daily, and in peak periods up to 200 per day. Facility residents are also using the network more and more. The frequent network failures experienced with the old Wi-Fi due to the rural setting have yet to occur since the new network has been installed. For staff serving the hotel and care facilities, this reliable Wi-Fi makes their work easier and saves time: for example, when documenting care activities on site using mobile devices. Other expansion stages are possible, and this could include automated door monitoring solutions for example.

"We didn't encounter any problems working with ELBE GmbH and our interaction was very relaxed. It was particularly important to us that the project got implemented quickly and we succeeded in doing just that with ELBE," says Buchacher about their experience working with ELBE.

The innovative Ruckus solution and strong support of ELBE GmbH not only increased satisfaction among hotel guests but also laid the groundwork for advancing digitalisation in long-term care operations. In addition to documenting care activities on mobile devices and providing Internet access to Laetitia facility residents, the solution can also be used with new technologies moving forward – for both the hotel industry and care sector.

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