



CASE STUDY



"We evaluated many products but only one answered all the questions put to us by our customers—Colubris Networks' "hotspot in a box" public access solution. When this system was combined with the Alepo All-in-One Radius, Billing and CRM server, we were able to provide a very cost-effective solution with the flexibility, ease-of-use and amazing stability demanded by our customers."

Howard Russell
Director
Signature Networks



Providing Internet Access to Visitors of Madejski Stadium

Madejski Stadium—Scoring with Fans and Executives

Madejski Stadium is the proud home to the Reading Football Club Royals of the English Premier League and London Irish Rugby Club. Opened in August 1998 at a total cost of more than £50 million, the stadium sits on the outskirts of the London suburb of Reading, Berkshire in England. Boasting capacity for 24,200 spectators, this stadium complex also includes the Royal Berkshire Conference Center, 25 executive rooms, 4 executive suites and the Atrium Bar area.

To build on its well deserved reputation as a premiere championship stadium, Madejski decided that providing public Internet access for its fans, visitors and corporate clientele would be a smart move. "We initially wanted to provide secure Internet access from anywhere in the complex," said Gary Hanson, IT Manager at the stadium. "But we also imagined higher-value services for our special guests." In addition to Internet access, Madejski wanted a solution to help it enhance stadium administrative services, including ticket scanning, surveillance and vendor services.

"Wireless technology was the logical solution," continued Hanson. "It would provide the anytime, anywhere access to the Internet our guests required. It could also provide the opportunity for additional services—including more lucrative stadium-specific applications and services catering to the needs of special groups visiting the complex."

The Challenge—A Championship-Quality Wireless Solution

Madejski Stadium considered several business and technology models as it defined its requirements. At a business level, the Stadium wanted to control service pricing and have a flexible system that could be customized with branding and sponsorship advertising. Meeting these requirements ultimately would increase revenue and make the service profitable. Scenarios considered included profit sharing with hotspot service providers, delivery of both free and fee-based services and access via both wired and wireless media.

"We found that major service providers could only offer their standard pricing scheme. We could not offer customized login portal pages and the profit sharing revenue looked disappointing. We also needed the flexibility to offer a mix of free and fee-based services, with the flexibility to control both cost and revenue," said Hanson.

To meet these needs, the Stadium concluded it must own and operate all aspects of the system, including Wi-Fi access, access control, authentication, and portal and billing services. To minimize operating cost and complexity, the solution had to be easy-to-use, provide plug-and-play access to any wireless-enabled laptop, PDA or other mobile system used by visitors to Madejski. It must also be easy to deploy and operate. The solution was expected to leverage open standards, simplifying interoperability among all elements of the system while ensuring the system could easily grow with the success of the service—protecting the initial investment.



The Solution

Madejski Stadium selected Signature Networks, a leading integrator of advanced network-oriented solutions based in Hemel Hempstead, England, to design, install and integrate a complete public Internet access system. After an exhaustive evaluation, Signature chose partners Colubris Networks and Alepo to develop the solution for the Stadium with the Colubris Intelligent Mobility System (CIMS) serving as the foundation of the service.

The comprehensive CIMS solution suite is composed of MultiService Controllers, Access Points and a Network Management System that provide secure connectivity and seamless mobility for any environment, ranging from small remote offices to large headquarters locations. Flexible configuration options support enterprises and service provider networks. CIMS maximizes network capacity, integrates with existing network security and policy enforcement mechanisms, and deploys economically.

Features such as "zero-configuration" support and simultaneous 802.1x or Web-based Universal Access Method (UAM) authentication enabled full interoperability with both legacy and new Wi-Fi client devices.

Alepo offered its All-in-One RADIUS, billing and CRM server, enabling Madejski to meet its flexible access, portal and billing needs. The ability to seamlessly integrate the Colubris' CIMS with the Alepo All-in-One server was vital to rapidly deploying a solution with the flexibility and control required.

"The solution was extremely easy to deploy and operate," confirmed Hanson. "The entire system was operating throughout the complex and taking revenue within two weeks. We actually expect the system to pay for itself within the year."

Boyd Butler, Marketing Manager at the Stadium, added, "The business opportunity remains very attractive. We have the flexibility to offer any login product we like—including free or fee-based access for special groups. And because we own the entire system, we are able to take all of the revenue."

"Colubris has been an invaluable partner to Signature Networks, providing the technical expertise and system quality needed to ensure the business success of our customers," concluded Howard Russell.

About Colubris

Colubris Networks provides the industry's first and only optimized WLAN switch, the Colubris Intelligent Mobility System (CIMS). CIMS couples distributed intelligence with centralized WLAN management to optimize performance, mobility, scalability and investment protection. With a global customer base of more than 1,000 organizations across a wide range of industries, Colubris has connected more than 40 million unique users across the world. Colubris products have been honored with an array of awards, including Red Herring's Top 100, Fierce WiFi's "Fierce 15" and Network World's "World Class" Award.



200 West Street
Waltham, Massachusetts 02451
Phone: +1 781 684 0001
Fax: +1 781 684 0009
E-mail: info@colubris.com
www.colubris.com

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