



CASE STUDY



"We evaluated many products but only one answered all the questions put to us by our customers—the 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 of Signature Networks



Providing Internet Access to Visitors of Madejski Stadium

About Madejski Stadium

Madejski Stadium, home to the Championship Reading Football Club and London Irish Rugby Club, sits on the outskirts of Reading, Berkshire in England. Boasting capacity for 24,200 spectators, this large stadium complex also includes the Royal Berkshire Conference Center, 25 Executive Rooms, 4 suites, and the Atrium Bar area.

In keeping with its reputation as a premiere championship stadium, The Madejski elected to provide public Internet access for its fans, visitors, and business/corporate clientele. "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." Enhanced stadium services that could include ticket scanning, surveillance, and vendor services could also be possible.

"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

Madejski Stadium considered several models as they defined their requirements. At a business level, they wanted to control pricing, make a profit and have a flexible system that could be customized with branding and sponsorship advertising. Scenarios 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.

Thus, to meet their various business needs, The Madejski concluded they must own and operate all aspects of the system, including Wi-Fi access, access control, authentication, portal, and billing services.

To minimize operating cost and complexity, the solution had to be easy-to-use, providing plug-and-play access to the diverse laptop, PDA, and other mobile systems used by stadium patrons. It must also be easy to deploy and operate. The solution was further expected to leverage open standards, simplifying interoperability among all elements of the system while keeping the door open to new services and applications over time.



About Signature Networks

Signature Networks is a specialist systems integrator and billing service operator. Providing customized solutions for proprietors and resellers in the hospitality, entertainment and education markets. Signature operates central billing services for Internet Access and VOIP offering tariff structures and services unavailable from the large national operators. Today, Signature is a preferred supplier of billing systems and services to many UK and European businesses.

About Colubris

Colubris Networks is a global provider of multiservice WLAN systems for enterprises and service providers, delivering highly scalable, flexible solutions for wireless voice, data and video networking. Colubris solutions make it easy and affordable for organizations to give their employees, guests, customers, suppliers and partners mobile access to network services. Today, more than 1,000 customers worldwide rely on Colubris' award-winning solutions, among them the world's most demanding wireline and wireless carriers, and leading enterprises and institutions in the hospitality, retail, education, and healthcare markets.

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 Madejski Stadium.

Colubris, a global leader in the public Internet access market, provided their industry-first "hotspot in a box" platform as part of the solution. Superior security, flexibility, and ease of use were enabled with a system combining advanced access control, firewall, and Wi-Fi certified access point functions into a single, standards-based platform. Features such as "zero-configuration" support and simultaneous 802.1x or Web-based Universal Access Method (UAM) authentication also enabled full interoperability with both legacy and new Wi-Fi client devices.

Alepo offered their All-in-One RADIUS, billing, and CRM server, enabling The Madejski to meet their flexible access, portal, and billing needs. The ability to seamlessly integrate the Colubris System with the Alepo All-in-One server was key to rapidly deploying a solution with the flexibility and control they 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.



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