



CenturyLink Solutions Featuring:

Local Ethernet Access and Networking Internet Port

Case Study: Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts



Customer:

Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts
www.parkcitywaldorfastoria.com/

Business Challenge:

Slow Wi-Fi performance negatively impacted the Internet experience for business and vacationing guests. Customer conversations focused on complaints and Hilton Corporate executives pressed for a solution to protect the firm's brand, market share and room pricing.

Solution:

The General Manager selected the CenturyLink® Ethernet, CenturyLink® Networking Internet Port solutions from among two competing vendors. CenturyLink project managers oversaw the permitting, construction and deployment of the 50 Mbps fiber circuit to the Hotel's mountain location.

Benefits and Results:

- CenturyLink® Wi-Fi solution dramatically improved customer satisfaction (by 10 points on satisfaction survey.)
 - Eliminated Wi-Fi service complaints from customers.
 - Put to rest corporate executive concern over the Internet performance issue.
- Protected luxury Astoria brand by offering high-performance Wi-Fi access.
- Protected against market share and room rate losses.
- Experienced eight-plus months of reliable, no-outage service to date in rugged, mountain environment.
 - Recovered hours formerly devoted to Wi-Fi issues for high-value activities.
- Increased employee productivity—High-performance Wi-Fi enabled employees to complete tasks during meetings.
- Lowered costs to recruit and interview prospective employees—Broadband connection enabled video conferencing to replace some face-to-face meetings.

Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts

Hilton Worldwide is a leading hospitality company, spanning 10 brands and 3,900 hotels across 90 countries. The Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts is Hilton's luxury hospitality brand. And it is this "luxury" quality that attracts a guest profile with high expectations beyond gourmet dining and spa experiences.

"The type of customer that stays at the Waldorf-Astoria is typically a self-made person," said Kerrington L. Hing, General Manager for Waldorf Astoria in Park City, Utah. "They're younger, expect things faster and are very tech savvy. So the tech amenities we offer them are some of the most important elements of the luxury experience they expect."

The Waldorf's mountain location is a double-edged sword. On the one hand it entices customers with its picturesque vistas and fun activities. But on the other hand, the very weather that brings skiers to the slopes can compromise the telecommunications experience customers demanded.



FACING THE CHALLENGES

After a day on the ski slopes, vacationers frequently upload pictures and video footage to social media sites. They download movies for their children to watch. They stream video from YouTube. Meanwhile, business guests use Skype and/or WebEx for conference calls as well as send and receive large documents, files and images. These bandwidth-intensive activities are only exasperated during the Hotel's busy winter season, when occupancy rates soar.

With the success of the Hotel's marketing efforts, the legacy Wi-Fi solution simply couldn't keep up with the demand for bandwidth.

"I was getting phone calls and emails from customers who were unhappy with our service," recalled Hing. "Every day I was hearing things like 'You're affecting my business,' and 'You're affecting my vacation and my personal time with my family.'"

“One of the measurable benefits of having customer-satisfying Wi-Fi in place is our market share. We are able to grow our market share in a competitive environment by getting telecom services right. It’s that simple.”

— Kerrington L. Hing, General Manager, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts

As a result, customer satisfaction ratings for the Hotel’s technology plummeted. Hilton executives took notice. “I had to turn things around,” explained Hing. “So I set out to meet my customers’ and executives’ expectations; to safeguard the Waldorf brand; and to protect our market share and room rates.”

PROVIDING A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION

“We chose CenturyLink for the same reasons that our guests choose us,” stated Hing. “They deliver anticipatory service, take care of business, inspire trust and follow-up to resolve any issues. They also proved to us that they can deliver reliable service to our mountain facility. The winter weather here can disrupt communications.”

Hing’s team worked with CenturyLink specialists to install a fiber-optic line to the property. The Local Ethernet Access service was provisioned with 50 Mbps of capacity and configured to provide Internet Port services as well as Wi-Fi access. “The CenturyLink project managers worked with local municipalities to get all the permits and construction approvals,” recalled Hing. “They took care of everything.”

The only hiccup occurred when the new service had difficulty communicating with Hilton’s internal system. Said Hing, “CenturyLink immediately got on the phone with the Hilton Worldwide IT people and resolved the problem within 24 hours. That was really quite impressive.”

DELIVERING RESULTS

The Hotel’s migration to the CenturyLink services solved Hing’s problems while delivering a number of additional benefits.

DRAMATICALLY INCREASED CUSTOMER AND HILTON EXECUTIVE SATISFACTION

In the eight months since the CenturyLink solution implementation, Hing has increased customer satisfaction ratings for “speed of Internet service” and “value of Internet service, by over 10 points. “That ranks us third in the company for those measures and we couldn’t have done it without the CenturyLink services.”

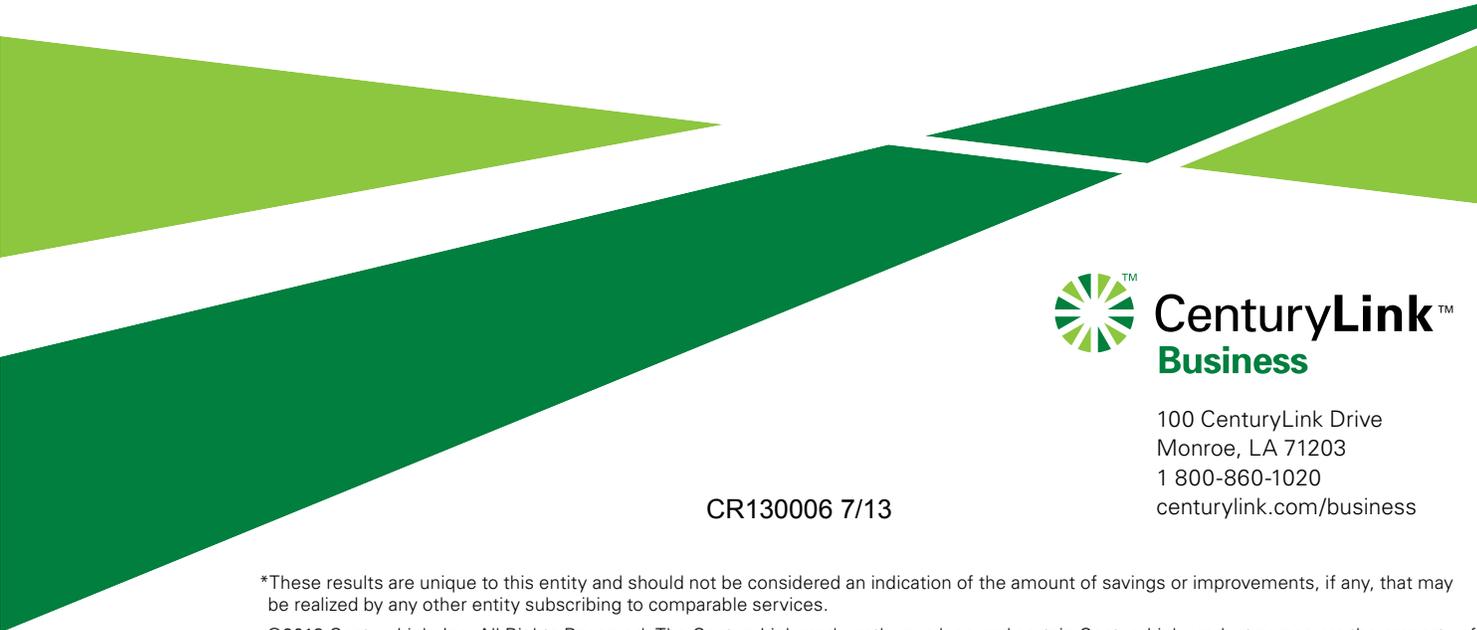
The marked uptick in satisfaction is the result of the reliability and performance the CenturyLink services have delivered—with no outages logged in nearly a year of use. “With that, all the phone calls from unhappy customers went away,” said Hing. “And our corporate and brand teams have removed ‘communications issues’ off their checklist for our Hotel. That consistency of service is vital to our guest experience.”

PROTECTED BRAND, MARKET SHARE AND ROOM RATES

The high-performance CenturyLink services give business customers and vacationing guests the luxury technology experience that they expect. “It’s fast and it always works,” explained Hing. “So our guest experience mirrors the Waldorf Astoria quality brand image. That helps us grow market share as well as to charge rates in line with a luxury hotel. It’s that simple.”

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY, LOWERED COSTS

The high-speed network has made Waldorf employees more efficient. “The CenturyLink Wi-Fi network allows us to get things done, immediately in a meeting, for example, or demonstrate something via WebEx conferencing,” stated Hing. “We also save time and money by interviewing prospective employees via video conferencing.”



CR130006 7/13



CenturyLink™
Business

100 CenturyLink Drive
Monroe, LA 71203
1 800-860-1020
centurylink.com/business

*These results are unique to this entity and should not be considered an indication of the amount of savings or improvements, if any, that may be realized by any other entity subscribing to comparable services.

©2013 CenturyLink, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The CenturyLink mark, pathways logo and certain CenturyLink product names are the property of CenturyLink, Inc. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.