

CASE STUDY

WiFi fun at Landal Holiday Parks



Stay connected while on holiday – WiFi fun at Landal Holiday Parks

WiFi infrastructure was set up at seven German holiday parks operated by Landal GreenParks in 2012. Our specialists from Aachen made sure holidaymakers can enjoy equal internet access anywhere in the spacious parks.



Going online wirelessly – and enjoying your holiday even more

Client satisfaction is key to operating successful leisure facilities. In the information age, accessing the internet on your laptop, tablet PC or smartphone is part and parcel of an enjoyable holiday for any guest. While in the past only businesspeople required internet access to be connected and reply to emails, using the internet has now become entirely second nature to all guests, old and young.

Pre-schoolers, business clients and silver surfers alike expect uninterrupted WiFi access while on holiday. This means guests expect to have WiFi beyond the reception area or the holiday home itself, but also in restaurants and at the outdoor areas – that is to say, anywhere in the park. In early 2012, Landal GreenParks faced the challenge to provide stable, so-

phisticated communication facilities fitting the overall holiday product.

The operators aimed to find a solution that was both cost-efficient and easy to manage. At this stage, seven LandalParks in Germany have implemented the WiFi solution devised by m3connect in Aachen. The result has been highly satisfying for Landal and convinced them to have this tried and tested system installed in even more parks in the near future.

Challenge

The aim was to install WiFi at holiday homes at seven of the Landal Parks in Germany, providing equal WiFi coverage across the entire park area, covering a total of 147 hectares – equal to a total of over 200 football fields.

Solution

A complete WiFi infrastructure including a total of 324 access points with different antennae for reliable and secure WiFi throughout the parks.

Advantages

- enjoying Facebook while out and about
- stable WiFi covering the entire park without any costly digging
- attractive pricing that works for guest as much as park operators
- legally airtight
- easy expansion of the system by means of
- additional modules like video on demand, VOIP, digital signage

Challenges – trees, pools, bungalows

A key aspect of the Landal concept is that parks are located amidst untouched nature. This means that mobile phone reception will be limited in parts, and in contrast to hotels of a smaller size, there will be insufficient wiring.

A particular challenge when installing the system in the parks was to ensure WiFi was equally strong at all holiday homes. Guest should be able to go online regardless where in the park they are, rather than having to go to a certain area, e.g. the reception.

Distance was not the only problem we encountered: There are different obstacles to overcome depending on the time of the year: Densely planted trees covered in leaves between the user and the WiFi access point can have an impact on reception.

Reception is also impeded by large buildings such as pools or wellness areas as they interfere with transmission to the access points. This is where the concept devised by m3connect came into play: The solution lay in choosing and placing the access points in the most suitable spots, connecting them most efficiently – both wireless and wired – while selecting the best matching antennas.

Besides, great care and professionalism were required in installing the system, including lightning protection. In other words: This required a WiFi solution individually tailored to Landal's needs. Within about six weeks, m3connect then realised these WiFi projects at seven Landal holiday parks, providing internet for a total area of 147 hectare – equal to over 200 football fields. The total number of holiday houses ranged from 89 at the smallest park in Travemünde in Northern Germany to 215 at the largest of the Landal parks in Leiwen on the Moselle river. Overall, we installed 324 access points across the parks.

m3connect WiFi – legally airtight solutions tailored to your needs

For hotel and holiday park operators, being on the safe side legally is very important when it comes to providing WiFi. Operators wish to avoid having the police knock on their door with a search warrant because of online crime happening at their parks. Increased use of WiFi technology has of course increased the risk that WiFi access might be used to transfer music, films or images illegally.

After all, IP addresses, which are generally easily traceable, will lead the authorities to the hotspot operator rather than the user. Choosing m3connect gives Landal GreenParks that peace of mind that for each instance of improper use by guests, as authorities will only ever have to liaise with m3connect rather than the park operator.

The next step – improved speed through optic fibre

Optic fibre allows internet access at a much faster speed than ever before as data transmission rates are many times that of conventional DSL connections. Upload and download speeds of up to 100 megabyte per second (mbit/s) can be achieved. In contrast to copper cables, optic fibre cables do not transmit data as electrical impulses but as light signals.

This does not only allow extremely fast data transmission, but also makes transmission less susceptible to electromagnetic interference. That is why Landal parks are scheduled to be connected to optic fibre before the end of this year. Also, the improved capacity resulting from this can be used for new applications including digital signage, video on demand or voice over IP calling. This will make going online at the holiday park even more fun!



Landal GreenParks

Landal GreenParks is a growing, dynamic business and a market leader in outdoor holiday park and camping holiday management, administration and rental. Landal operates a total of 73 parks comprising a total of around 12,000 holiday homes.

At 51 holiday homes, Landal is the number one holiday park provider in the Netherlands. Outside the Netherlands, Landal operates parks in Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland and Hungary. Seven of the holiday parks also offer camping sites offering around 1,500 camping pitches in total.

Landal GreenParks employ about 2,550 staff. What sets Landal Parks apart from other parks is the use of open space. Tranquillity, space and nature describe the core characteristics of the parks and are also the main reasons why holidaymakers choose Landal.

Landal GreenParks feels closely linked with the natural environment in which it operates. For this reason, Landal has developed a range of projects to promote man living in harmony with nature.

WiFi – An absolute must-have for modern holidays



An interview with Ernst Veldkamp, ICT project manager at Landal GreenParks:

Mister Veldkamp, why did Landal GreenParks decide to have a WiFi system installed although this is particularly tricky, taking into account the landscape of such parks?

As operators, we had one primary goal: We always want to offer our guests the most positive experience throughout their stay with us. Fast and easy access to communication media is simply indispensable for an enjoyable holiday nowadays. That is why providing stable internet access is key to running a successful tourism business.

Seeing that more and more people use mobile devices to go online, it's safe to say that while some might still see it as a 'nice to have' now, WiFi access will surely be an absolute must-have in the future.

Regarding barriers caused by the topography of our parks, m3connect have been able to completely fulfil our technical requirements and we have been able to apply the system to several other parks as well.

From your experience, which aspects of internet usage are of particular importance to your guests? And what do your guests think about the WiFi you offer?

Many of our guests use skype and social networks such as Facebook. They also tweet and blog or simply browse the internet. Young people also bring their games consoles to be able to play online.

Given this, it's obvious why operators of modern holiday resorts need to provide good WiFi.

Our guests love the system we have put in place. Price stability in the leisure sector is different from the hotel business, for instance - nonetheless we are experiencing high demand. That shows us that our pricing is working and that we've been able to successfully implement our concepts. Many holiday-makers are already purchasing WiFi access when they book their holiday homes because it is cheaper to do so in advance. Our guests are also very happy with the multilingual 24-hour helpline. This way, they can contact the WiFi operator directly for assistance rather than having to come to reception.

Mr Veldkamp, what are your views on working with m3connect?

Working with m3connect was a great experience. m3connect were very attentive when it came to planning and the specific requirements we have.

They then offered us clever solutions tailored to our needs that met all of the requirements we had set out. We were particularly impressed with the actual installation of the system as the team they sent worked together perfectly as a team.

Our contacts at m3connect were absolutely reliable, and competent to answer even tricky questions on minor details. They were with us at every stage of the project. Overall, we felt there was a high level of transparency and fairness. At this point, we have installed m3connect's systems in seven parks in Germany and plan to have further ones installed in parks in Germany and abroad.