

The Morrison - innovating for competitive advantage

Morrison Hotel in Dublin, part of the global Hilton franchise, is using its technology partnership with AirSpeed Telecom to deliver innovative communications services that put it on par with the best equipped hotels in the world.

Hotels have always operated in one of the most competitive market sectors. Whether providing accommodation, conferencing services or both, hotels in capital cities like Dublin must offer something more, especially as conferencing events incorporate a greater degree of technology and innovation.

As General Manager Patrick Joyce explains, The Morrison is a design-led boutique hotel that re-opened in 2013 following a complete refurbishment. The hotel, which is a franchise partner with DoubleTree by Hilton, has worked to raise the bar particularly for business travellers, offering everything from the highest specification bedding, in-room technology and interior design, right down to the warm chocolate chip cookie every guest is offered on arrival.

"The hotel and conferencing business in Dublin is having a very good year, and the Morrison is competing well, but customers continue to be mindful of price and of what hotels are offering," Patrick says. ***"We absolutely have to stay ahead."***

Formerly the general manager of a hotel in Kilkenny, Patrick had worked with AirSpeed Telecom there to deliver high-speed internet for the hotel. He said the company was the first he called when setting up communications in Dublin for the Morrison, and he appreciated their ability to bring a number of new ideas to the table.

Competing with innovation in the hotel and conferencing market

At the heart of the solution AirSpeed proposed was a very high-capacity licensed wireless data link, providing all internet communications into the hotel. The Morrison took the forward-looking decision to use the 100 Mb connection to offer a standout service to clients: free 100 Mb per second Wi-Fi for everyone, and a complementary VPN-secured communications network unique to each guest bedroom.

This means that corporate customers, who make up between 60% and 70% of the Morrison's guest volume, can plug in and get to work without violating their company's IT security policies, which often prohibit the use of any open Wi-Fi network for staff.

"Our guests love the fast Wi-Fi – they say it's lightning-fast, and they appreciate the security, because large multinationals typically don't let their employees use free Wi-Fi services," Patrick says. ***"Our guests have the option of using the free wireless connection which is unique to them and their room. This is a stable connection over VPN at 100 Mb per second, which makes our guest offering an industry leader-that's hugely important to us as a Hilton franchise."***



Reliable telephony to protect business continuity

It was the proven stability of the 100 Mb per second AirSpeed connection which inspired the Morrison to broaden the relationship to cover its voice telephony requirements. A previous outage with its standard telephony lines meant the hotel was unable to make or receive calls on its landlines for three days, a devastating blow in the hospitality business.

"By contrast the AirSpeed link had been rock solid, so we decided to take AirSpeed's advice and move to them for voice connectivity," Patrick says. ***"It immediately saved us about 30% on our call costs, and they manage the voice system for us. For us it's seamless: we have one bill, and one provider for internet and phone."***

The voice system design by AirSpeed is based on a SIP trunk and incorporates a secondary backup telephony service over copper to ensure business continuity in the event that the primary service fails.

Pushing the envelope with live conference streaming

Another innovation recently adopted by the Morrison is a live video streaming service made available to conferencing clients. This facility, building on the AirSpeed AirStream service, means that corporate events can be broadcast live to be viewed on the web, at true broadcast quality. This optional premium service is supported by the flexible AirSpeed data link, which can burst up to 200 Mb per second to guarantee video quality.

Patrick says the hotel is continuing to look for ways to use technology for competitive advantage.

"Guests don't just need a place to stay, they need a whole communications infrastructure. Our communications are now a reason people are using us- it is a real value add," he says. ***"We want guests to feel that when they're here, they're taken care of."***

AirSpeed & Morrison Hotel Telecom at a glance:

- 100 Mbps data link providing Internet service, also leveraged to provide free 100Mbps Wi-Fi for clients
- In-room Wi-Fi within a private VPN bubble offers secure communications for corporate visitors, in addition to open guest Wi-Fi network
- Market-leading Wi-Fi service puts Morrison communication services on a par with the very top hotels in the global Hilton franchise
- An AirSpeed SIP trunk provides incoming and outgoing calls, incorporating a resilient backup service that protects hotel's business continuity for voice
- New voice service has proven more stable than previous solution and delivered immediate cost savings, with total investment recouped within weeks.
- Flexible technology partnership helps Morrison continue to innovate, including unique live video streaming service for conferencing clients, using AirStream from AirSpeed
- Dedicated AirSpeed 100Mbps licensed wireless data link can burst to 200Mbps as needed to support video streaming

