



CASE STUDY Hospitality

American Airlines Center Flies High with Centralized Wi-Fi from Aruba

American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas, is considered by many to be one of the most technologically-advanced sports and entertainment venues in the world. Co-owner Mark Cuban recently spent over \$281 million to renovate AA Center, the home of the Dallas Mavericks and Stars, bringing state-of-the-art optical networks, high-definition TV and other cutting-edge technologies to the center. To fill the 800,000 square-foot venue with pervasive and secure network connectivity, the AA Center turned to Aruba.

AA Center has deployed over 50 Aruba access points that logically connect to a centralized Aruba 5000 Mobility Controller across AA Center's IP network. AA Center is leveraging Aruba's plug-and-play deployment model to provide wireless connectivity on-demand. If network connectivity is needed quickly, AA Center IT staff merely plugs an Aruba AP into any available Ethernet port. The AP is then automatically configured through the Aruba Discovery Protocol.



AA Center's first priority was installing a system capable of securing its in-seat concession application. Order-takers equipped with Casseopia handheld devices take and fill concession transactions right at the fan's seat. Each Casseopia is equipped with a Movian VPN client that establishes a secure and encrypted tunnel to a centralized Aruba 5000 Mobility Controller. Each VPN tunnel is terminated directly on the Aruba 5000 and the transactions are then forwarded to back-end accounting systems. For this application, Aruba

also enforces machine authentication and stateful user policies that prevent any other wireless user or device from accessing this wireless network. Only the Media Access Control (MAC) addresses of the authorized handhelds are allowed to access to the specific SSID used for this application.

In the event of MAC address spoofing the Aruba system recognizes the impersonations and automatically blacklists the device.

The AA Center had deployed third-party "thick" APs that they wanted to continue to use. These APs, however, didn't function as a unified system or provide visibility into the RF spectrum for security and troubleshooting. The AA Center placed these existing APs into a discrete VLAN and terminated that VLAN on the Aruba 5000. The Aruba system applies stateful firewall policies to user traffic thereby adding value to AA Center's existing investment.

"Aruba's system eliminated having to deploy and manage different devices such as VPN concentrators, RF monitoring systems, firewalls for access control and intrusion prevention systems," said Joe Heinlein, director of Information Technology at the American Airlines Center. "A single Aruba mobility controller in the data center now performs the tasks of more than seven other devices at about 25 percent of the



Requirements:

- Secure in-seat wireless concession application
- Provide on-demand 802.11 a/b/g service to media and visitors
- Use a single wireless network to provide different access and security rights to different users
- Centralized policy management for wired and wireless users
- High-speed VPN termination of IPsec and PPTP tunnels
- Plug-and-play installation and automated configuration
- Support for existing third-party APs already in use

Solution:

- Aruba MMC-5000 Mobility Controller
- More than 50 Aruba AP-60/61 dual-purpose 802.11a/b/g APs
- ArubaOS Mobility Software, VPN Server, Adaptive Radio Management and Wireless IDS

Benefits:

- Reduced operational management and capital expense
- Plug-and-play deployment
- Per user roles and policies automatically enforced upon authentication
- Remote troubleshooting
- Secures third-party "thick" APs

cost. That's real value no matter how you look at it," said Heinlein.



AA Center is leveraging the Aruba system to provide different levels of network access and security over a single network. Through the use of Aruba's centralized policy management engine, Heinlein can define roles and policies for different user groups. As each user authenticates to the network, they are assigned access rights to the network

that follow them. Network services can then be restricted and controlled by a variety of different metrics including location, time-of-day, authentication method, BSSID, and more. AA Center is also using the wireless system to provide on-demand wireless network access to media and visitors as well as to support over 150 wireless surveillance cameras used by security officers.

"For large-scale deployments such as these, the operational expense associated with deploying wireless dwarfs the equipment costs," said Heinlein. "The Aruba system guts these operational and deployment costs for us, giving us centralized visibility, security, control and management." Heinlein noted that even given the size of the facility and installation at AA Center, they are now able to troubleshoot and tune the network from a single point without manual intervention.

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Company Overview:

Located in Dallas, Texas, American Airlines Center is one of the country's most technologically sophisticated sports and entertainment venue's in the world. AA Center is home to the Dallas Stars professional hockey team and the Dallas Mavericks professional basketball team.

"We are very excited to be working with Aruba to enable us at the American Airlines Center to use secure wireless access to be far more efficient and profitable in our efforts to support and please our customers."

Mark Cuban

*Owner
Dallas Mavericks and
the American Airlines Center*



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