

COMCAST BUNDLES AN HDTV/BANDWIDTH SOLUTION

FOR RAYMOND MANAGEMENT COMPANY

SITUATION

- Two locations in Ann Arbor, MI; five leading hospitality venues in greater Chicago
- A portfolio of almost 1,000 rooms serving business and vacation travelers

CHALLENGE

- Provide high-definition TV while adapting to changing technologies
- Deliver rapidly scalable bandwidth to meet new guest expectations

SOLUTION

- Bundled Ethernet Dedicated Internet, Hospitality HD, and Business Voice

RESULTS

- Simplicity of maintenance, better performance and improved appearance in guest areas
- Bandwidth scalability
- Operational preparedness

A CHICAGO-AREA HOSPITALITY LEADER UPGRADES ITS TV, EXPANDS ITS INTERNET AND PROVIDES QUALITY SERVICE WITH COMCAST

COMCAST BUNDLED SERVICES GIVE RAYMOND MANAGEMENT A ONE-STOP SOLUTION

The rock is consumer expectations: travelers accustomed to high-definition TV and high-speed Internet at home expect nothing less at their hotels. The hard place is rapidly changing technology and the cost of capital investments. Hospitality leaders like Raymond Management, owner/operators of award-winning hotels nationwide, find themselves caught between the two.

Raymond Management Information Technology Director Steve Dettman sees the dilemma first hand: “Customer expectations are driving technology investments in the hospitality industry,” he explains. “Guests want their access to their technology, home or away, but there’s a lot involved in meeting those expectations at a hotel. If you make the wrong investment, it can cost you time and capital. Hotels that were first-to-market with high definition TV spent large amounts of capital only to find that the equipment was obsolete almost immediately.”

“The proliferation of offerings and media access are racing ahead,” Steve continues. “When we think we have the bandwidth need solved, another bandwidth-hungry application leaps over from the consumer market into hospitality. We have to be ready.” With Comcast bundled services, they’re ready.

COMCAST BUNDLES HDTV HOSPITALITY, ETHERNET DEDICATED INTERNET, AND BUSINESS VOICE FOR RAYMOND MANAGEMENT

Reliability, ease of maintenance and a one-shop for bundled services helped Steve choose Comcast. “We were very leery about adding other options at the properties,” Steve says. “The downside of some solutions is reliability – adding boxes in all guest rooms are problems waiting to happen. Comcast offers a single device that streams out to all the hotels versus multiple points of potential failure. The physical space the device takes is minimal and the setup was simple and efficient.” Installation and testing went smoothly – “We had Comcast engineers and technicians on site during the first conversion to ensure a successful implementation,” Steve recalls – and the added capabilities Comcast Business offers, such as the ability to add an open channel for internal broadcasting and HD choices, are value-adds.

“I wanted to work with Comcast – it’s a lot easier for me to work with one stop for HD, PRI and Internet. I’d rather have a company that was truly going to work with me on the whole process. The more variables you introduce, the more you’re behind the curve on change.”

Steve Dettman
Information Technology
Director
Raymond Management
Company

High-definition television was only part of the challenge Comcast helped to overcome for Raymond Management. “I also need fast reliable Internet, and combining those two in one company gives me leverage on both,” Steve says. “Bandwidth is key in our business. The ability to scale rapidly has absolutely increased our ability to sell our meeting rooms and spaces to pretty much anyone. With these systems we can accommodate groups that we couldn’t serve before. The economy of scale in leveraging PRI, HD technology, and Internet was worth waiting for.”

BUNDLED SERVICES DELIVER BUNDLED BENEFITS FOR RAYMOND MANAGEMENT

Simplicity of maintenance, better performance and improved appearance in the guest areas

Comcast’s hardware resides in the hotel’s PBX room, eliminating the clutter of set-top boxes and the need to enter guest rooms for service. Guests are pleased with the reception and picture, and the programming offerings.

Bandwidth scalability

“It’s the nature of the business now – every hotel like ours needs this bandwidth. This is the new standard,” Steve says. “Look at almost any survey of the amenities guests expect, and across the board it’s Internet at the top. It’s more important to them than anything else. People will tolerate other issues but if your Internet is down, they’re gone.”

Operational security and future-proofing

Speed and reliability are as important for the company as they are for its guests, and Raymond Management’s internal operations depend on the same Internet connectivity they offer travelers. The added reliability of Comcast’s services helps them manage this part of their national portfolio. Also, the bandwidth they get from Comcast helps them expand and adapt to inevitable changes in television and growth in bandwidth, and the scalability permits them to compete more effectively for business.

“It’s incredibly valuable for us that we can adjust our bandwidth to guest demand this rapidly,” Steve says. “With cable, we can accommodate groups that we couldn’t serve with legacy equipment.” Rapid scalability is an edge in the marketplace – the legacy solutions that took two or three months to scale can be adjusted by Comcast quickly with a software change. Steve says, “That flexibility permits us to offer something our competition can’t, and that’s the new standard.”

“The key issue is competing effectively now and tomorrow,” Steve says. “The kind of groups we’re talking about used to have to go to much bigger facilities. Now they expect it anywhere they go. Any hotel without this in place is looking at losing customers.” And Comcast delivers the assurance that Raymond Management will be ready to serve their changing needs. “I wanted to work with Comcast – it’s a lot easier for me to work with one stop for HD, PRI and Internet,” he says. “I’d rather have a company that was truly going to be a partner with me on the whole process. The more variables you introduce, the more you’re behind the curve on change.”