Wireless solutions for a hospitality revival

Streamvision specialises in guest entertainment solutions including IPTV, casting, and high-speed internet for all types of accommodations, from some of Australia's most iconic hotels and clubs to student housing, guest lodges, and remote mining camps. The firm partnered with Aruba through Dicker Data in 2020 a bid to improve quality and reduce costs for its hospitality customers – a move that proved prescient when the pandemic hit the industry.

Challenges:
- Unjustifiable equipment costs from previous vendor
- Lack of real-world technical experience amongst channel partners
- Unresponsive, often rigid approach to licensing and fulfilment

Solutions:
- Integrated, next-gen hardware and consolidated licensing from Aruba
- Deep technical expertise, collaboration, and solutions flexibility from Dicker Data

Benefits:
- Lower costs and outstanding service quality for hotel customers
- New services better aligned to hospitality's post-pandemic challenges
- Higher responsiveness and agility in meeting customer needs

DICKER DATA   **aruba** a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company   **streamvision**

Challenges:

High-cost, high-complexity wireless that left customers in the cold

Streamvision sought out a new wireless solutions vendor when the costs of working with their incumbent – a popular wireless brand in the hotels space – proved too high to justify.

"We wanted to provide cost-effective solutions with solid ROI to our customers, and the equipment we were using at that point just wasn't doing that," says Greg Bassine, Director at Streamvision. "Not only were the costs of hardware exceptionally high, but we and our customers were struggling with the complexity and volume of licensing, installation, and maintenance needed to connect different next-gen services beyond plain Wi-Fi."

Other issues also hampered the overall quality of service that Streamvision could offer to its hospitality customers. Unavailability of access points, switches, and other stock frequently put new opportunities at risk. Solutions partners often lacked the real-world experience to guide Streamvision through more complex technical challenges, forcing its consultants to go direct to manufacturers. And the incumbent's highly structured licensing ecosystem left little room for Streamvision to adapt and innovate in its customers' best interests.

"We were asking ourselves, can we do better? What's the actual best outcome we can give to our customers?" says Bassine. "It was getting harder and harder for them to justify the costs of their wireless technology, and we wanted to change that."

Solution:

Simple, integrated Aruba solutions backed up by Dicker's renowned service

Aruba's value proposition caught the Streamvision team's attention because of its all-in-one approach to connectivity and licensing – combined with a much lower price point. "The all-in-one units that Aruba offered were certainly a drawcard. They have a product suite which is really well suited to the space we're in," Bassine says, pointing at features like Wi-Fi 6 and one-stop licensing management through Aruba Central. "But it was Dicker Data's expertise and flexibility that really changed the game."

The partnership saw Streamvision team up closely with Dicker Data's experts to unknot more complex technical questions and better align Aruba's stack with customers' needs. In one early instance, the Streamvision team was struggling to identify which Aruba devices would best suit a large technology upgrade for a Canberra hotel. Darko Raic, one of Dicker Data's top solutions architects for Aruba, was quick to lend a hand.

"We understood the technology basics, but the wide range of options was a challenge," Bassine recalls. "Darko's a magician: when we approached him, he knew not only which switches and access points would best fit the customer, but how to piece them together into that single platform that Aruba's solutions allow for. It's the difference between whitepaper knowledge and real passion for the product."

More recently, Streamvision worked with Darko to consolidate multiple networks across a major Australian hotel chain, substantially lowering its capital and management overheads. "The chain was running a Zigbee network just for its smart locks, a Wi-Fi network for guests, other networks for each different service," Bassine says. "We used Aruba's access points, which support standards like Zigbee and Wi-Fi 6 in the one device, to knock out all those extra networks with a single deployment."

Streamvision now looks to Dicker Data as the single source of truth for all things Aruba-related, allowing the firm to respond faster to customers and subsequently win more opportunities. Streamvision also relies on Dicker Data's inventory levels to deliver Aruba solutions with minimal disruptions.

"When you're dealing with hotels, you have to install a lot of equipment – up to hundreds of access points – and we've often faced issues with other vendors when it comes to timely fulfilment," Bassine explains. "Dicker Data is great at keeping stock: they're constantly bringing items in early to pre-empt the needs of end-customers. Reliable access to inventory has been hugely important for us, especially through the pandemic as our own business model evolves."

Benefits:

More agile, cost-effective wireless offerings for the pandemic and beyond

Working with Aruba and Dicker Data has helped Streamvision not only minimise overheads for customers, but also offer more creative licensing and pricing models – both of which have proven hugely helpful for venues trying to recover after the pandemic.

"Most vendors take a highly structured approach to delivering product that aims to maximise their profits, but Aruba and Dicker have been quick to entertain more outside-the-box thinking to better serve our customers and their guests," Bassine says.

Aruba's willingness to offer standardised pricing, coupled with Dicker's focus on customer-centric architecture, has helped Streamvision launch new services like CLUBStreamvision. The as-a-service model gives hospitality customers the wireless upgrades they need, at a much lower upfront cost and with greater lifecycle flexibility.

"Venues are reopening to much higher guest expectations around fast speeds, easy content casting, and property-wide access – but they don't have the cash upfront to make the necessary upgrades," Bassine explains. "With our as-a-service model we're offering prices that are as much as 40% less than competitors' – which is great for our ability to build business, but also an amazing result for hotels getting back on their feet. This isn't possible without the flexibility and forward thinking that Aruba and Dicker Data provide."

Streamvision's refined approach to connectivity services, enabled by Aruba and Dicker Data, looks to be far more sustainable for both its profits and the hospitality in the long term. For Bassine and his team, that sustainability has defined the partner relationship ever since its earliest days.

"That property in Canberra which we won at the very start of our partnership, we barely hear from them about any issues," Bassine says. "And recently, when we checked in with them, their General Manager told us that the guest experience of Wi-Fi has gone from zero to hero –they're constantly getting great comments about speed and connectivity.

"It's not often that you can go from having almost no understanding of the tech, to achieving a breakthrough result that stands the test of time. That's really a credit to the commitment of the Dicker Data team."

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