

Company: Swisscom Event Solutions

Industry: Event support

“As far as the client was concerned, this was the most trouble-free network provisioning that they have ever had for an event.”

Naunton Dickins, Vice President of Swisscom Event Solutions in Europe, the Middle East and Africa

The challenge: Providing failsafe bandwidth at an important client event

Swisscom Event Solutions, a subsidiary of Swisscom Hospitality Services, which is owned by the Swiss telecommunications operator Swisscom AG, provides networks and technical services at corporate events, working with production companies and event planners to ensure training sessions, product launches, press days and other activities requiring a high level of technical expertise all go ahead without a hitch.

Supplying the technical resource behind complex corporate events is a job that leaves no margin for error, particularly when the client concerned is a company that prides itself on its technology leadership.

This was the case with Salesforce.com, a web-based customer relationship management systems specialist that approached Swisscom Event Solutions early in 2007 for help with the first product launch it had held outside of the United States.

The event was to feature a keynote address in the morning, to be broadcast live over the internet and recorded for later playback as a video-on-demand, and would also host up to around 50 Salesforce.com development partners, including Google and Citrix, which all needed bandwidth to support live demonstrations of the applications they had developed around Salesforce.com’s internet-based software.

Salesforce.com had held an event at the same venue, a central London hotel, a couple of years before. At the time, the hotel’s network had collapsed under the strain. So the brief to Swisscom Event Solutions was simple: “Make sure it works this time.”

In practice, for Swisscom Event Solutions this meant planning and coordinating a failsafe, high-bandwidth network provision for the event and making sure there was full redundancy to leave no possibility for a breakdown.



Implementing Urban Wimax

Naunton Dickins, Vice President of Swisscom Event Solutions in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, explained: “The hotel had a 10 Meg leased line, which is unusual, but they didn’t know what to do with it. The provider had all the routers locked in a box and so there was no way of getting the right amount of bandwidth to the right locations in the hotel.

“We just didn’t feel comfortable that they could respond in an emergency and the client was adamant that they wanted a 10 Meg leased line. To install another one just for the event would have been prohibitively expensive and ADSL simply wouldn’t cut the mustard, so that was when we started to look at point-to-point wireless.”

Urban Wimax uses a ‘standards-based’ Wide Area Network technology that provides high-throughput broadband connections over long distances. It is an intelligent technology that supports many different types of application, from videoconferencing through remote access to web surfing, all at high level of service.

Dickins chose Urban Wimax because of its willingness to offer a flexible package that suited Salesforce.com’s requirements.

“There isn’t really a market for providing networks for one-day events so when you are quoting for this kind of thing it is difficult to put your finger on the button, but I think Urban Wimax got it right,” says Dickins.

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Another plus was Urban Wimax's speed of installation. Says Dickins: "When I wait for a team to install fibre, it is usually a 60-day wait."

In contrast, Urban Wimax was able to install the network in a couple of days, thanks to the ease and speed of installation, Swisscom Event Solutions was able to have the Urban Wimax network up and running two weeks ahead of the event, with a 10Mbps duplex connection.

Nevertheless, when the day of the event arrived, Swisscom Event Solutions was taking no chances. "We went over the top," recalls Dickins. "We had two antennas on the roof, double connections everywhere and a guy from Urban Wimax sat there all the time, ready to switch between one connection and another should we lose bandwidth."

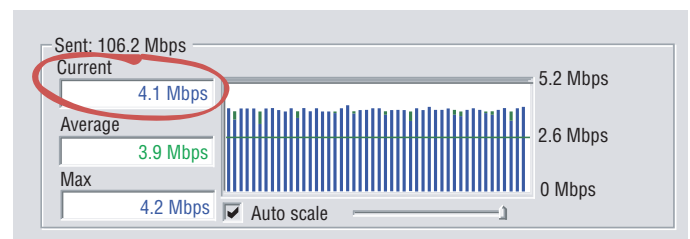
In the event, these precautions proved unnecessary. As it is constantly monitoring all customer connections, Urban Wimax spotted a momentary flicker in bandwidth to the event during the proceedings, but the problem resolved itself immediately. "This was the first time the Salesforce.com partners congratulated the hotel on the quality of its network connection," says Dickins. "Of course, they didn't know it was actually us providing the connectivity!"

Future plans

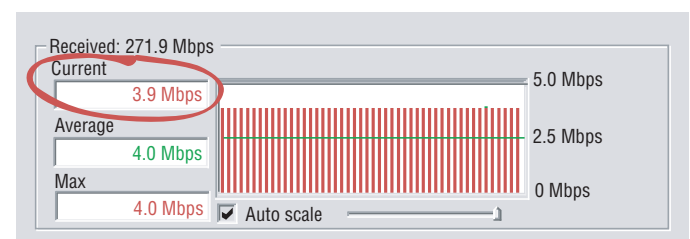
The experience has left Dickins fully prepared to use Urban Wimax for future events: "From the success of our first event working together, we have been left feeling very positive about working with Urban Wimax again in the future. Their flexibility and speed of deployment makes for a very attractive package."



Urban Wimax Independent Test Results



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Summary:

Key Benefits:

- Flexible commercial approach
- Rapid installation
- Dedication and professionalism

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