

EventCity Manchester Excels with Huawei 10G Campus Network Solutions

Huawei 10G Campus Network provides a modern, extremely reliable and ultra-fast network to the UK's premier exhibition space.

Background

EventCity Manchester is the leading event, exhibition and Conference venue in the North of England. With a population of approximately 6.8 million people nearby, EventCity Manchester is the 2nd largest event space outside of London, and the most dynamic and growing event brand in the UK. Established in 2010, the facility includes 4 halls totalling 36,000 sq meters. EventCity Manchester holds more than 45 events, concerts, conferences, and exhibitions each year. Recent highlights include X-Factor Live auditions (Manchester), the UK Wedding Show, and the Caravan and Motor Show.

The mission of EventCity Manchester is to provide the best exhibition space in the UK, with superior services that exceed the needs of their customers. Services that allow the event organizers and exhibitors to provide the visitor with an outstanding overall experience, one where the visitor is motivated to engage with the exhibitors, make lifestyle purchase decisions, and communicate their experiences to family, friends, colleagues (and the world) through modern tools such as social media.

The management of EventCity Manchester realized early on that ICT, and specifically a scalable, reliable and fast local network, was key to customer satisfaction. For EventCity, the challenge was to build an infrastructure that would meet their current ICT requirements, while at the same time be flexible and scalable enough to accommodate new technologies and challenges for the next 5-10 years. Therefore, in concert with their ICT partner The Hub Group, EventCity decided to implement a modern and forward-thinking ICT environment with Huawei's 10G campus network solution as its foundation.

"Peel has ambitious goals for the future, including the expansion of MediaCityUK, investment in hotels, airports and leisure facilities, plus the plan to invest 50 billion GBP over the next 50 years in the Ocean Gateway project. To reach these goals, Peel will need strong partners that can provide innovative solutions with global support, partners like Huawei."

John Armitage-IT Manager, The Peel Group

Customer

EventCity Manchester

Industry

Convention Center/Event Hosting

Solution

2x Huawei S6700 24 EI Mainframe (24GE SFP / 10 GE SFP+) used as the core switches

1x Eudemon 200e-X3 AC Host Firewall with content manger Licence

6x Huawei S5700 28c PWR EI Mainframe

3x Huawei S5700 52c PWR EI Mainframe

Business Needs

- A scalable and reliable 10G network that will allow EventCity to provide services to a large number of simultaneous users.
- A fast network that will accommodate major events such as concerts, TV broadcasts, exhibitions, and technology demos.
- A BYOD support platform that will allow EventCity to provide secure and reliable network access to thousands of daily visitors.

Results

- EventCity has an ultra-fast network in place which allows it to provide high-bandwidth services to exhibitors and visitors.
- Thousands of daily visitors to EventCity enjoy reliable and fast network and Internet access, with no interruptions even during peak hours.
- Power consumption has been reduced via Huawei's Green Solutions, while the Huawei equipment is strong enough to survive the rugged environment of an active exhibition hall.

Case Study



Key challenges

"If the visitor has a good experience, the exhibitors have a good experience, then the organizers have a good experience, then the organizers get repeat business. This is the business model behind EventCity."

Andy Orr, Managing Director, EventCity

When EventCity opened in 2011, their business model was quite straightforward: to provide the best exhibition services in the country. Initial efforts focused on creating a unique and versatile space with all the physical requirements that major events require. However, EventCity Manchester was not expected to grow so quickly (for example, winning the X-Factor Live Auditions Manchester), so the initial ICT infrastructure was soon oversubscribed. Prior to engaging with The Hub Group, the core ICT network was made up of a mixture of ad hoc switches and routers from various vendors. However, it rapidly became apparent that in order to provide the services demanded by exhibitors and visitors, EventCity required an ultra-fast, reliable, and flexible network.

Although the services required by EventCity's customers can vary bit based on the type of show, there is a consistent demand for reliable and high-speed networking. Services required include high-speed Internet access, VPN access, online payments/point of sale transactions, remote office access, video conferencing, CCTV, and IPTV.

Solution

The Hub Group analyzed EventCity's business model, their existing infrastructure and determined the following requirements for the new network:

- Bandwidth and scalability: In order to serve a large number of concurrent event visitors, EventCity Manchester requires a network with capacity for a large number of simultaneous users, plus room for high-bandwidth applications such as video gaming or video.
- Support for BYOD: Each exhibitor and visitor to the exhibition site brings their own device. Therefore, EventCity acts as an ISP and must have a strong BYOD policy in place.
- Resiliency, reliability and high availability: The network must be able

to deliver high levels of up-time during events. The equipment must be able to survive in the rugged environment of an active exhibition hall.

- Energy saving network design: Due to the large size of EventCity, power consumption is extremely important. The space uses a significant amount of power (including a Phase 3 circuit board), so any power savings can be passed onto event organizers.

EventCity, and their parent company Peel, enjoy an excellent working relationship with Huawei partner The Hub Group, and sought their advice on the infrastructure upgrade. While this project initially focused on only EventCity Manchester, Peel understood that in order to achieve their worldwide growth goals (in property, ports, media, hotels, advertising, renewable energy, etc.), they would require an innovative, dynamic, flexible and global ICT provider. Peel need better economies of scale from a full-service ICT vendor that could standardize ICT solutions across the entire company. Therefore, Hub recommended Huawei's 10G Campus Network Solution should serve as a model for future network-upgrades across the Peel Group.

The Huawei network deployed by EventCity Manchester consists of 2 Huawei S6700 24 EI Mainframe used as the core switches, 1 Eudemon 200e-X3 AC Host Firewall with content manager license, 6 Huawei S5700 28c PWR EI Mainframe switches, and 3xHuawei S5700 52c PWR EI Mainframe switches.

End-User Benefits

EventCity realized significant and measureable benefits in upgrading to the Huawei 10G Campus Solution, with room to grow their business over the life of the network. An important benefit which was immediately noticed by EventCity's customers was the much improved ability to access the network during peak times due to the upgrade to 10G.

"At any point during an event at EventCity Manchester, we can have 14000 visitors at the site, with up to 35,000 over a weekend. From the start, the Huawei network provided a much better event experience for our customers, by allowing virtually all our attendees to log-on and use our services."

Andy Orr, Managing Director, EventCity

Case Study



The new network helps EventCity to attract major exhibitions that would have been impossible without the high-bandwidth provided by the 10G Campus Network. An example of the high-end of network requirements faced by EventCity Manchester was the Play Expo Video game exhibition, held in October of 2012, with over 250 exhibitors. Each one required an ultra-fast/low latency connection for video game demos and contests.

"The Play Expo event is a perfect example of how EventCity is benefiting from the Huawei network. This event required enormous amounts of bandwidth for the various demos from X-Box, EA Sports, Nintendo, Sony, SEGA and others - with all wanting to download to you tube instantaneously. Without the capacity of our network, we would have been facing some angry video-gamers, but indeed the event was a big success and will return in 2013."

Andy Orr, Managing Director, EventCity

Another key benefit of the Huawei solution was support for BYOD. With Huawei Eudemon firewall and content manager license in place, EventCity Manchester is now able to safely and securely offer BYOD to its customers, while maintaining a secure environment as it delivers Internet Access to a large number of visitors. By using the Huawei firewall, EventCity is able to protect its network while provides a secure environment for its visitors.

Green IT and environmental responsibility are not just slogans for EventCity and Peel, rather these are critical parts of their business. The Peel Group is a major power utility in the north of England, with large investments in low-carbon technologies such as wind, tidal and hydro. And for EventCity, power consumption is a critical business expense, with any power savings being passed on to their customers.

"Huawei was attractive to us due to the energy saving green design built-in to the switches. We know Huawei can build both rugged and energy saving equipment, due to their vast experience in building global telecom networks in places where power availability is quite difficult."

Andy Orr, Managing Director, EventCity

Finally, Huawei offered a Total Cost of Ownership that its competitors simply could not match. The Huawei 10G solution was priced

competitively with other vendor's 1G network offer, making the overall cost of the Huawei to be significantly less (in price and complexity).

"The business of EventCity is exploding: a larger number of clients plus larger and more complex events. As the business grows so do the IT requirements. It does not take rocket science to work out that there is no point in installing a 1GE limited network, and then in 18-24 months we must rip it out, when we can get a 10GE network from Huawei for the same price."

Tony Shooter, Managing Director, The HUB Group

Future Plans

In 2013, EventCity Manchester will run Huawei's eSight unified management platform. This will provide an even better BYOD experience, plus the ability to manage both Huawei and non-Huawei network elements (such as WiFi) in a single, easy-to-use platform. As the EventCity model grows in the UK, Huawei will be able to help facilitate the growth with a proven 10G solution.

Furthermore, the Peel Group can now look to Huawei as a global partner, a partner who can support their business growth with innovative, flexible and cost-effective solutions.

"EventCity Manchester is now among the most technologically advanced exhibition facilities in the UK. Thanks to the 10G network solution provided to us by Huawei and their partner Hub, visitors and exhibitors enjoy an amazing range of technical services, while the event space is now ready to hold even bigger events and concerts in the coming years."

John Armitage-IT Manager, The Peel Group

Case Study



About EventCity and The Peel Group

EventCity Manchester is located next to The Trafford Centre in Manchester, EventCity is a vast single building situated on a privately-owned 24-acre site, surrounded by free parking and with immediate access to major motorway networks, rail networks, airports and public transport.

EventCity launched as 'the exhibition space' in March 2011, and has since hosted a portfolio of prestigious consumer & trade shows plus high profile entertainment events including The X Factor Manchester live auditions, the Commonwealth Heavyweight Boxing Title, the Powersnooker Masters Trophy, glittering Christmas party nights and the phenomenally successful Caravan & Motorhome Show in January attracting over 35,000.

Now recognised as a leading leisure venue in the North West, EventCity has an exciting calendar of events throughout the year, that includes general interest exhibitions, specialist hobby shows, trade fairs and entertainment events <http://www.eventcity.co.uk/>

EventCity is a part of The Peel Group, one of the leading infrastructure, real estate and investment enterprises in the UK. The diverse network of businesses ranges from ports to airports; land to leisure; media to hotels; wind farms to shopping centres, and a portfolio of investments in major public companies. www.peel.co.uk

About The Hub Group

The Hub Group is one of the UK's leading information and communications technology companies (ICT). Hub advises, installs and maintains systems critical to the private and public sectors. Powered by a dedicated and talented team, blending business and technology that delivers innovative ICT solutions to shape our dynamic world. <http://www.hub-group.co.uk/>

About Huawei Enterprise Business Group

Huawei Enterprise Business Group ("Huawei Enterprise") is one of the three business groups of Huawei, a leading global information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider. Leveraging Huawei's strong R&D capabilities and comprehensive technical expertise, Huawei Enterprise provides a wide range of highly efficient customer-centric ICT solutions and services to global vertical industry and enterprise customers across government and public sector, finance, transportation, electric power, energy, commercial businesses, and ISPs. Huawei Enterprise's innovative and leading solutions cover network infrastructure, unified communications and collaboration (UC&C), cloud computing & data center, enterprise information security, and industry application solutions.

For more information, please visit: <http://enterprise.huawei.com/en/>

