

Jaypee Hotels Limited (JHL), a subsidiary of Jaiprakash Associates Limited, owns and operates hotels in India. The company is also involved in the hotel construction business. It owns two five-star deluxe hotels – the Jaypee Palace in Agra and the Jaypee Vasant Continental in New Delhi. It also owns a five-star hotel, the Jaypee Siddharth, in New Delhi and manages the operations of the Jaypee Residency Manor in Mussoorie and the Jaypee Green Resorts in Greater Noida.

The Indian hospitality segment is likely to witness investments of over \$200 billion over the next three years, according to tophotelprojects.com, a global database and research website for hotel construction projects. With the objective of tapping the business opportunities this growth may entail, JHL took steps to upgrade its communications set-up. The basic idea behind the shift was to meet customer requirements and provide network access across the value chain.

tele.net tracks the development of the hospitality major's telecom set-up...

Legacy system

According to Debasis Pal, deputy manager, systems, JHL, the company used a simple telecom system prior to 2000. "In the early days, we had deployed Novel servers with coaxial connectivity. However, troubleshooting for this set-up was challenging, especially if any of the network nodes got disconnected," Pal says. Besides, all of the hospitality major's departments were connected through a simple local area network. The company's offices made use of plain old telephone systems for internal communication, and email for external communication.

However, as its business grew and competition intensified, JHL realised the need for adopting a telecom infrastructure that facilitated efficient and contemporary work practices, and optimised workflow.

The shift

As the first step towards upgrading its communications set-up, the hospitality major shifted all its operations to the Windows platform. This was carried out in tandem with the deployment of unshielded twisted pair (UTP) cables. “We opted for UTP cabling, which consists of two unshielded wires twisted around each other, for our LAN and telephone connections owing to its low cost. UTP cabling does not offer as high bandwidths or as good protection from interference as coaxial or optic fibre cable (OFC), but it is less expensive and easier to work with,” explains Pal.

For last mile connectivity, the company opted for an OFC-based network. “This network provided us very high bandwidth as compared to other cable-based data transmission mediums. It is flexible and accommodates future bandwidth requirements. Further, new equipment can be added to the OFC, which can provide higher capacity than the initially laid fibre,” says Pal.

JHL has deployed enterprise resource planning (ERP), apart from other software applications which were provided by Oracle and SQL and are based on the Windows server platform. While ERP delivers a unified database for different functions, JHL uses group-specific applications that cater to each department within the company. The company’s communications network’s overall bandwidth is 10 Mbps at a 1:1 ratio. It has been sourced from Tata Communications.

Challenges and benefits

The hospitality major did not face any major challenges in upgrading its network infrastructure. However, Pal says that the increasing cost of equipment and fast technology obsolescence are key concerns for the company. While the aim is to keep pace with technology advancements, high costs are a prohibiting factor as the most cutting-edge mediums are available to a select few.

In terms of benefits, the company’s employees are now able to access the network and the hotel’s management information systems easily. Moreover, the company’s network speed has increased significantly. “Network management has been simplified, and data and network security as well as redundancy have improved,” says Pal.

Overall, it is evident that the hospitality major is reaping the benefits of a stable and robust communications infrastructure.

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