LUSH COSMETICS
Ruckus Unleashed Wave 2 802.11ac Smart Wi-Fi network enhances customer experience

RUCKUS™
an ARRIS company

OVERVIEW

Lush was established in the UK in 1995 and has over 900 shops in 49 countries. The company is well-known for its fresh and handmade products, ranging from bath products and hair products to skin care products and cosmetics. Lush does not limit its target customers to females and young people, but targets all people of different ages who like fresh products. To celebrate its 20th brand anniversary, it opened a Lush Spa and flagship retail store in Hong Kong in last November.

REQUIREMENTS

- Fast and reliable high speed Wi-Fi access

- High performance and high capacity Wi-Fi network to support up to 60 people in 1 hour

- Great wireless connectivity that mitigates interference and performs well in high density environments

- A high quality service to elevate and complete the customer experience by offering free Wi-Fi to its customers

SOLUTION

- Deployed 5 Ruckus ZoneFlex R500 Unleashed 802.11ac controller-less access points

BENEFITS

- Ensured a smooth internal operation of the flagship store

- Enhanced the customer experience in store

- Increased customer engagement and enhanced their experience

- Significantly reduced upfront costs as separate controllers and access point licenses are no longer needed

LUSH UNLEASHES SMART WI-FI IN FLAGSHIP HONG KONG STORE

The retail landscape has changed dramatically over the last few years, especially with the boom of the online retailer and the proliferation of smart devices. With the rise of e-commerce and the ease in which new players can enter the online market, traditional retailers are seeking means to maintain control and keep consumers walking through the door.

Leading retailers are moving towards a more digital and connected customer experience in order to remain relevant in today's environment. From mobile apps and shopping to analytics and social media, the customer journey is being reimagined. All of these innovations are driving a new hybrid instore / digital shopping experience, which will connect everything from physical and online stores to mobile and social engagement.

THE CHALLENGES

Established in the UK in 1995, Lush is well-known for its fresh handmade products, ranging from bath and hair products to skin care and cosmetics. Part of the appeal of the Lush brand lies in their innovative design and branding of their retail stores, as well as its excellent customer service. Currently Lush has over 900 shops in 49 countries, with nine stores throughout Hong Kong.

To celebrate its 20th brand anniversary, Lush opened Lush Spa and a flagship five floor store in Central Soho Square, Hong Kong. To enhance the shopping experience for its customers, as well as improve back room capabilities, such as wireless scanners, video conference calls and EPOS systems, Lush required a fast and reliable wireless network.

However, its current Wi-Fi provider for the eight other stores in Hong Kong was not satisfying its needs and Lush decided it was time to look for a new vendor.

"The legacy Wi-Fi network deployed across our other Lush retail stores was not satisfying our needs. We experienced an unstable connection, low speeds and cutouts. Often we needed to reboot the network during important tasks. We couldn't even offer Wi-Fi to our customers in the store to elevate their experience. It was an awkward experience for both the staff and customers," explained Victor Ma, IT Support at Lush.

Part of the problem was the complex RF environment of the stores. The materials used in the design and layout of the store are known to cause wireless interference, particularly wood and metals, which would lead to slower performance or disconnection from the Wi-Fi network. This would not be tolerated in the new spa and flagship store.

"We were not confident the network was stable enough to offer Wi-Fi to our retail customers. When we opened our new flagship store, performance was

our top consideration and it was clear we needed a higher capacity wireless network, which was significantly more reliable and capable of delivering higher speeds," said Ma.

UNLEASHING THE SOLUTION

In order to overcome the challenges relating to the reliability, speed and performance of the network Lush made the decision to look for a new wireless vendor to meet the needs of the new store. The network needed to support around 60 connections per hour for its internal operations, such as wireless scanners, video conferencing and EPOS systems, as well as the use of tablets and smartphones for customer engagement.

After some initial testing, Lush decided on Ruckus Wireless and deployed five ZoneFlex R500 Unleashed dual-band 802.11ac Wave 2 Smart Wi-Fi access points, which have been located on each level of the store.

Ruckus R500 Unleashed enables controller-less Wi-Fi architecture with superior performance, lower costs and simplified management. This enables Lush to securely manage the network from anywhere at any time using any browser or any device, all while significantly reducing upfront costs as

> "Performance was the top consideration for us. Ruckus Unleashed provided the quality of service, value and ease of use to support a smooth internal operation and an enhanced customer experience."

VICTOR MA
IT Support, Lush

separate controllers and access point licenses are no longer needed.

Each access point is capable of supporting up to 500 clients, with user throughputs of 867 Mbps (5 GHz) and 300 Mbps (2.4 GHz). Each unit also provides concurrent support for HD IPTV, VoIP and isochronous, multicast IP video streaming.

The Ruckus ZoneFlex R500 Unleashed integrates patented BeamFlexTM and ChannelFlyTM technologies which was crucial to the success of the deployment. BeamFlex maximizes signal coverage, throughput and network capacity by creating the optimum antenna pattern for each communicating device in real time, while actively mitigating interference. ChannelFly leverages BeamFlex to learn and select the best RF channel, increasing overall network capacity in the most challenging conditions.

"We have been very happy with the speed and reliability of our network. In the seven months since it has been deployed we have experienced very few connection problems. The network has integrated seamlessly into our stores and has been embraced by our customers. "The Ruckus Unleashed network has made life easy for our staff with simple access points which work independently. If one is down, the others will not be affected," concluded Ma.

Since the deployment of the Ruckus Unleashed Smart Wi-Fi network, Lush has seen several benefits, not only for its customers but also in the delivery of its services, as it embraces new technologies and social media platforms to attract customers into its stores.

"We encourage customers to take photos of the colorful interior designs of the Lush shops and upload the photos to social media platforms to help promote the brand and products. The Ruckus Unleashed Smart Wi-Fi network has provided us with a stable and reliable network allowing for instant uploads, check-in on social media platforms and sharing of customer experiences in our stores," explained Ma.

The new Ruckus Unleashed Smart Wi-Fi network has significantly aided Lush in achieving its efforts in elevating the customer experience by enabling the company to offer a range of exciting new services and promotions, as well as support internal operations. In fact, Lush has found the Ruckus Unleashed Wi-Fi network is much more stable than that of their other retail shops.

Following the success of the installation, Lush plans to deploy Ruckus Unleashed products in Lush Hong Kong office and other retail stores in Hong Kong. The rollout will be prioritized in shops with a customer density.