

# Where is the WiFi?

## The Challenge to Improve Guest WiFi Network

### BACKGROUND

Competition within the hospitality industry has intensified with the advancement of mobile technology and a demographic shift in digitally savvy and always connected customers. In less than a decade, traditional hotel chains face stiff competition from the rise of short-term accommodation services like Airbnb that offer unique, but inconsistent experiences for guests.

To attract and retain travelers, hotels are looking for innovative solutions to accommodate guests' expectations. While for business or leisure, virtually all guests use their mobile devices to stay connected to family, friends and colleagues. It's no wonder that for the modern hotel guest, free, fast and reliable WiFi is not a luxury, but a necessity.



We chose TP-Link for the Sandman Hotel project because we found their hardware to have enterprise-level reliability at a competitive price point. They provided staff training on designing the network and choosing the best location to install TP-Link access points across 35 Sandman hotels."

**Mike Yeung**  
President,  
Profusion Technologies

According to a survey by Statista<sup>1</sup>, 80% of travelers said that Internet access is crucial. TripBarometer<sup>2</sup>, the world's largest traveler and accommodation survey by TripAdvisor, found that 46% of travelers said free in-room WiFi is a must-have amenity. If an accommodation did not provide WiFi, travelers would look elsewhere. Twenty-six percent of travelers said they require an accommodation that has super-fast WiFi, 11% are willing to pay extra for this service.

### PROFILE

## Profusion Technologies

**Name:** Profusion Technologies

**Industry:** IT Support and Managed Services

**Location:** British Columbia, Canada

**Profile:** With over 18 years of experience in delivering and supporting a variety of IT solutions, Profusion Technologies is a managed IT service provider that consistently exceeds expectations in all verticals.

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.statista.com/chart/9620/hotels-just-give-me-wi-fi/>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.tripadvisor.com/TripAdvisorInsights/w665>

## CHALLENGES

### Improve the guest WiFi network

Sandman Hotel Group is a Canadian hotel chain owned by Northland Properties with 47 properties across Canada. The hotel chain was receiving front desk complaints and negative online reviews from customers about slow and unreliable WiFi. Without a free wireless connection to the Internet, guests were having trouble checking email, accessing social networks, streaming TV shows and movies, checking local maps, and booking ride sharing transportation.

The management team at Sandman recognized the need to optimize and update the networks of each hotel to provide reliable, high-speed WiFi across the entire premise. Sandman contracted the services to Profusion Technologies - a managed service provider - to build the network infrastructure and provide 24/7 support for network related issues.

Founded in 1998, Profusion Technologies provides a host of IT services and solutions to a variety of industries with a specialty in hospitality. With a chain of 47 properties across Canada, Profusion Technologies was tasked to revamp the guest WiFi networks for 35 hotels with specific networking requirements.

### Reliable network hardware to deliver fast guest WiFi

The network traffic demand must be sustainable to accommodate all guests and business needs. Any dissatisfaction in WiFi will affect customer returns and adversely impact the chain's business revenue and efficiency.

### Robust wireless access point design to mitigate spotty coverage

Since guests are roaming the building when they are on their wireless devices for work or entertainment, any dropped connections or slow WiFi areas will result in negative reviews. The selected solution must be able to send WiFi signal to hard-to-reach spots.

### Simple and secure guest authentication

The first question that often gets asked is, "what is the WiFi password?" The solution must be intuitive and simple for ease of guest access and the Sandman hotel staff doesn't need to go into lengthy explanations on how to log onto the hotel's WiFi to ensure operational efficiency. Since Sandman is a popular choice for business travelers, WiFi security to protect guest access is of utmost importance.

## SOLUTIONS

### TP-Link has robust hardware and continuous B2B support

To assess and troubleshoot the current WiFi networks at Sandman hotels, Profusion Technologies worked with TP-Link Canada to audit the guest WiFi networks at several locations. Founded in 1996, TP-Link is a global leader in networking devices and accessories supplying distribution to more than 120 countries. With a proven track record of stability, performance and value, TP-Link provides a host of networking solutions for SMB and Enterprise customers.

Teams from Profusion Technologies and TP-Link Canada collaborated and uncovered many network design issues related to the positioning of the current access points from the existing hardware provider. TP-Link Canada proposed a new network design and tested several new access points across the hotel premise. The guest WiFi network drastically improved, with 100 percent coverage across each of the tested Sandman hotels.



Our end-to-end solution from network assessment to product recommendations to post-installation follow-up, support and training is what differentiates TP-Link in the market. The Profusion-Sandman Hotel project is an exemplary partnership that demonstrates [with our solution] the hospitality industry doesn't need to put a dent in their budget to provide guests with basic, reliable necessities: Fast, high-performance and secured WiFi."

**Ivan Li**  
General Manager,  
TP-Link Canada Inc.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Mitigating the WiFi challenges at Sandman hotels

Sandman Hotel Group wanted guests to have a better WiFi experience during their stay. Profusion Technologies and TP-Link Canada implemented a solution to meet each of the following requirements from Sandman Hotel Group.

### Latest WiFi specifications for performance and reliability

Understanding the importance of fast and reliable guest WiFi, TP-Link Canada recommended the EAP245, a wireless dual-band gigabit ceiling-mount access point. Supporting the latest generation of 802.11ac WiFi with 3x3 MIMO technology, the EAP245 can achieve WiFi speeds up to 1.75Gbps. With 1,300 Mbps on the 5GHz band and 450 Mbps on the 2.4GHz band, guest with dual-band devices can now access reliable and consistent coverage over both the 2.4GHz and 5GHz wireless bands.

Band-steering greatly improves the performance of connected dual-band devices by automatically moving guests' dual-band devices to the wider 5Ghz band for faster connections. EAP245 is also equipped with high-gain antennas to create a powerful signal that easily passes through hotel walls.



### Robust wireless access point design integrates aesthetically

Sandman wanted consistent wireless strength throughout every hotel room. TP-Link Canada recommended the EAP225-Wall, a wireless MU-MIMO wall-plate access point. Designed for hotel rooms with wired and wireless connections, the EAP225-Wall features easy-mount construction for installation into 1-gang electrical wall boxes. For complete in-room WiFi coverage, its compact and low-profile design fits discreetly with any existing interior style hotel room. Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) support ensures a fast, effortless and flexible deployment across each hotel room to provide guests with a strong, consistent wireless signal from their own private WiFi network.

### SMS authentication simplifies login and protects guests

Sandman was looking for a simple yet secure solution for guests to access the WiFi network on a variety of mobile devices. TP-Link recommended that Profusion Technologies use their centralized management platform, Omada. The Omada ecosystem is free to use and requires no license fee or extra costs. It incorporates WiFi products, switches and security gateways for remote network management. With Omada, Profusion Technologies can remotely create customizable guest authentication for Sandman hotels.

Hotel guests now have access to a secure WiFi network with captive portal and wireless isolation technology. Newly added SMS authentication simplifies the connection process for guests and protects the network against threats from unauthorized use.



When it comes to wireless network in an enterprise setting like a hotel chain, you have to design it properly. Our team took time to train Profusion employees on how to setup and design the Sandman hotel networks across many hotels, where to install access points, RF channel management, and other considerations for wireless deployment."

**Rafi L. Islam**  
Sales Engineer  
TP-Link Canada Inc.

## CONCLUSION

### TP-Link improves guest WiFi experience at Sandman hotels

Over the course of three months, Profusion Technologies retrofitted 35 of 47 Sandman hotels across Canada. TP-Link provided ongoing support as a value-added service and assisted on the landing page design, RF channel management and installation training. The entire project was a success with a decrease in guest complaints and negative reviews regarding the WiFi. Through the collaboration between Profusion Technologies and TP-Link Canada, guests can now expect fast, reliable, and secure WiFi during their stay at any Sandman Hotel.

## PRODUCT PROFILE

### MOVE TO THE CLOUD

#### Omada Centralized Management

There are many benefits to moving your WiFi management to the cloud. The Omada product line provides many options to seamlessly move your WiFi network to a centralized location as demonstrated in the case study. In addition to significant business costs savings, business operations are optimized with real-time WiFi statistics, network traffic remote access, a complimentary captive portal, system upgrade and reboot convenience and scalable network infrastructure as business grows.

#### OC200

Omada Cloud Controller

#### EAP 225- Wall

Omada AC1200 Wireless MU-MIMO Wall-Plate Access Point

#### EAP 225

AC1350 Wireless MU-MIMO Gigabit Ceiling Mount Access Point

#### EAP 245

AC1750 Wireless Dual-Band Gigabit Ceiling Mount Access Point

#### EAP 320

AC1200 Wireless Dual-Band Gigabit Ceiling Mount Access Point

#### T2600G-28MPS

JetStream 24-Port Gigabit L2 Managed Switch with 4 SFP Slots



Register to be a partner at [www.tplinkcanada.ca](http://www.tplinkcanada.ca) today!





Visit **TP-Link.com** | E-mail **info.ca@tp-link.com** | Call **(905) 881-9469**

### About TP-Link

Founded in 1996, TP-Link is a global provider of reliable networking devices and accessories, involved in all aspects of everyday life. The company is consistently ranked by analyst firm IDC as the No. 1 provider of WLAN and broadband CPE devices, supplying distribution to more than 120 countries and serving hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

With a proven heritage of stability, performance and value, TP-Link has curated a portfolio of products that meet the networking needs of all individuals. Now, as the connected lifestyle continues to evolve, the company is expanding today to exceed the demands of tomorrow.

TP-Link believes in maintaining a consistently high-level of service and solutions. Our expert engineers will come to your organization and provide complimentary network assessment and WiFi and heat map services. When you become a TP-Link commercial business partner, you will experience:

- Free network assessments
- Free dedicated support
- Free training
- Free firmware updates
- Free limited lifetime warranty
- Up to 8% backend rebate on all commercial products



Register to be a partner at **www.tplinkcanada.ca** today!