Timeless, unique, iconic: This is what defines Almanac Hotels. The exclusive, international hotel brand introduced a new era in February 2018 with the opening of Almanac Barcelona, near Plaça de Catalunya in the heart of Barcelona. The goal: to transform historic buildings in the heart of European metropolises with caution, style, and a timeless design into high-end hotel experiences.

"With Almanac Hotels, we consistently aim to create lasting memories for our guests, to give them real ‘wow’ moments while staying at one of our locations," explains Tatiana Jardim, brand manager for Almanac Hotels. "We act according to this principle in everything that we do. This starts with the selection of our locations, goes over the facilities and décor of the rooms, and, last but definitely not least, stops at the technological aspect."

Accordingly, a secure, fast, and reliable IT infrastructure is essential and highly strategic for the Vienna-based international group. After all, the IT infrastructure not only supports internal accounting and booking systems but also the special Almanac services that the hotel provides for its guests—from the booking of hotel services via its own app, to Voice-over-Internet-Protocol (VoIP) telephony, and high-definition TV streaming services in the rooms and suites.

**CASE STUDY**

**Luxury Hotel Company Enhances Guest Experience**

"Guest behaviour has changed dramatically in recent years," says Truc Pham, general manager of the hotel sector-focused IT services provider CCT Software Solutions and Almanac's partner in the ambitious network project. Whereas guests once had only one electronic device with them, they now have multiple ones, including notebooks, smartphones, and tablets. Every device needs to be connected to the internet. For this reason, ensuring smooth Wi-Fi reception with sufficient data capacity in every corner of the newly opened hotel in Barcelona was a primary goal. This turned out to be much more difficult to put into practice than to plan on paper, Pham notes in retrospect: “Especially in historic buildings with strong walls and a robust construction, as was the case in Barcelona, a continuous wireless connection without interruptions poses the biggest challenge.”

The hotel group thoroughly reviewed three different network systems from different vendors before deciding on Fortinet—not only because of its “one-stop network solutions” approach, but also because of one special feature: Virtual Cell technology. Virtual Cell is perfectly suited for applications such as VoIP telephony, where both guests and in-house staff at Almanac Barcelona are equipped with mobile VoIP terminals.

“**When it comes to Wi-Fi, we feel that we are truly fit for the future.**”

— Tatiana Jardim, Brand Manager, Almanac Hotels

**Details**

**Customer:** Almanac Hotels  
**Industry:** Hospitality  
**Headquarters:** Vienna, Austria
Furthermore, it also makes it possible for guests to “hop” seamlessly from one access point to another while moving around the hotel with a smartphone—without interruptions or needing to log in again and again. For the guests, the entire hotel appears as one single large, reliable Wi-Fi hotspot. The result: a consistent Wi-Fi experience with consistently high connection quality.

**End-to-End Network Solution from a Single Source**

The main task of ensuring that the infrastructure works seamlessly is done by network controllers in the Almanac data centre, more precisely, by two redundantly designed FortiWLC wireless controllers. They work in the background to enable devices to move from one access point to another without the guest noticing.

Access to the network in Almanac Barcelona is carried out via a total of 132 Fortinet FortiAP access points used for the 61 rooms, 39 suites, meeting rooms, lobby, and outdoor areas. This is also rounded off by 2 FortiGate firewalls and 31 FortiSwitches.

“Technologically, we have not only found the best solution for the individual needs of the Almanac Barcelona, but also ensured extremely simple management of the entire system,” Pham asserts. This means that all network components in Barcelona can be managed clearly from the IT headquarters in Vienna. Instead of having its own IT department in the Spanish metropolis, there is just a local “IT fire brigade troop” that swoops in only when hardware needs to be serviced manually.

**Fit for More Future Services**

So far, however, this has not been necessary. Since the Fortinet solutions have been deployed at Almanac Barcelona, it has been running reliably, quickly, and securely. “We are very pleased with what we have received, in terms of performance, security, and management,” Jardim says. “When it comes to Wi-Fi, we feel that we are truly fit for the future.”

As her gaze wanders into the future, the Almanac roadmap is full. The hotel group is focused on expansion: In 2020, the location in Vienna will shine in new Almanac splendour, while new locations in Prague, Budapest, and Zagreb will follow in the next couple of years. This means that around 1,200 rooms will require new Wi-Fi components.

Even though the project scope of high-density installations will double at some sites compared to Barcelona, Almanac hotels are well prepared when it comes to network and security thanks to the extensive first experience with Fortinet during the Barcelona project. This enables the hotel to devote even more time to the wishes of its guests. For example, the specially developed Almanac app, which allows individual services to be booked in the hotel from a central platform, will be further expanded, thus further intensifying the individual Almanac experience for guests. “This is for even more personal ‘wow’ moments,” concludes Jardim.

**Business Impact**

- Cost avoidance for hiring a local IT team due to centralized management at headquarters
- Enhanced brand value with guests via secure, seamless wireless connectivity
- Access extended to every corner of a solidly built historic building

**Solutions**

- FortiAP
- FortiSwitch
- FortiWLC
- FortiGate

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– Truc Pham, General Manager, CCT Software Solutions