



CASE STUDY

Wi-Fi Means Business for City of Prospect



Free public Wi-Fi is at the heart of City of Prospect’s ambitious programme to create jobs, attract shoppers, and cater to tech-savvy students, millennials, and digital workers. To ensure that their Wi-Fi infrastructure would be accessible, secure, and robust, Prospect has installed a comprehensive array of Fortinet equipment. And to help them specify, install, configure, and manage their “Prospect Super Fast Wi-Fi” network, they selected Vintek, a Fortinet Silver Partner with particular expertise in secure Wi-Fi provision.

“The city wanted to embrace the way people do business,” says Chris Hannaford, director business and innovation at City of Prospect, an inner urban community of 21,200 residents located immediately north of the City of Adelaide, South Australia. “Adelaide had implemented an inner city-wide Wi-Fi network, and it was proving to be a draw card for today’s ‘always on’ consumers. So we knew we had to offer something better to put ourselves on the digital map.”

Request for Proposals

The first step was a technical specification. “It was simple, really,” says Hannaford. “We wanted a Wi-Fi network that would be faster, accessible, and robust to bring in the type of people who would be driving our economic growth in the future. We have a vibrant hospitality and retail sector in our Prospect Road Village Heart neighbourhood, and we sponsor events like the ‘Tourrific’ street party to coincide with the Tour Down Under. We wanted to give visitors and residents the very best Wi-Fi experience possible.”

“Vintek are corporate partners of City of Prospect and were invited to provide the Wi-Fi system,” says Paul Vinton, owner and CEO of Vintek, an Adelaide-based technology company with an Australia-wide footprint. “We already had a managed services contract with City of Prospect and had a good understanding of their networks, staff, and aspirations. Helping them put together a state-of-the-art Wi-Fi solution would be, from our perspective, a dream contract. But we had to earn their trust. Other locations around the area had implemented Wi-Fi with varying results, and Prospect wanted to ensure that they would get it right the first time.”

Tight Time Frames

The answer was a weeklong “proof-of-concept” Wi-Fi installation at council chambers. “As part of our proposal, we installed a complete self-contained Fortinet Wi-Fi network,”

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Details

Customer: City of Prospect

Industry: Government

Location: Urban community north of Adelaide, South Australia

Partner: Vintek

Business Impact

- Continued uptake in usage as a result of robust operations and multiple login options
- Growth in retail and hospitality sectors due in part to Prospect Super Fast Wi-Fi initiative
- Minimal management overheads enable City of Prospect employees to focus on increasing stakeholder engagement

explains Vinton, “to coincide with key council events. This enabled councillors and staff to see firsthand how the system would work and the benefits of wireless networking. Everything went according to plan; the city was convinced, and we were awarded the contract in early December.”

The only issue was timing. Fifteen thousand tech-savvy bicycle enthusiasts would be converging on Prospect Road Village Heart for Tourrific on January 17, and Chris’ team wanted the system up and running for the event. “A big ask,” admits Vinton, “but we had confidence in our capabilities. So we put our reputation—and Prospect’s—on the line and committed to delivering the Wi-Fi solution with the desired performance in time for Tourrific.”

Top-of-the-line, Fast Action

Vintek and Prospect’s tech team got busy. “To ensure that Prospect would get optimal results, we installed top-of-the-line Fortinet equipment: An industrial-strength FortiGate firewall capable of 3.2 Gbps throughput, a FortiCache WAN [wide-area network] accelerator for even faster performance, a constellation of 20 infrastructure access points, and FortiGuard threat intelligence subscriptions for all components to ensure that real-time security would be maintained,” Vintek says. “We also installed FortiPresence so that merchants and planners could analyse traffic and user patterns to maximise system uptake.”

The install, completed over the busy Christmas holiday period, went smoothly. “It was a narrow window,” continues Hannaford, “but Paul and the teams made it happen. We tested, retested, and tested again. It all looked good, and the performance metrics met or exceeded specifications. But we had 15,000 people, all wanting wireless access, coming to town, and our go-live date—January 17—left no margin for error.”

15,000 People, No Problems

On the day, everything worked well. “There were no issues whatsoever,” notes Hannaford. “The feedback was almost universally positive. People expected a robust Wi-Fi experience, and that’s exactly what they received. Wi-Fi is perceived as a public utility, and anything less is unacceptable. We now have a Wi-Fi network second to none in the region, and the word is getting out: If you want trouble-free Wi-Fi for shopping, working, social media, or studying, City of Prospect is where you should be heading.”

City of Prospect Mayor David O’Loughlin is enthusiastic about the initiative. “It’s great that this world-class Wi-Fi system was successfully trialed at our iconic Tourrific Prospect Street Party. Prospect Super Fast Wi-Fi is an important step in cementing our position as a globally recognised Smart City. The Prospect Super Fast Wi-Fi initiative will help create a vibrant network of young entrepreneurs and digital natives who will use the system to connect nationally and internationally. Already we have two co-working spaces set up in the Village Heart. Prospect Super Fast Wi-Fi will ensure that professionals and businesses can meet and engage in the main street with reliable and secure broadband.”

More on the Horizon

City of Prospect is just getting started with their Smart City initiatives, and Wi-Fi is a key component. “Now that we’ve got a framework we can expand,” concludes Hannaford, “we’re repositioning some of the APs [access points] for wider coverage and increasing our backhaul feed for more capacity. We’ve added Wi-Fi in council facilities, and we’re working with selected merchants and internet cafes to take advantage of the traffic patterns we’re uncovering. We are promoting the service with new signage and running workshops to bring even more stakeholders into the mix. It’s an exciting time at the City of Prospect, and we are confident that our Fortinet solution and managed services from Vintek will continue to play a critical role in the city’s future.”

Solutions

- FortiAP
- FortiGate
- FortiWiFi
- FortiCache
- FortiPresence
- FortiGuard Security Services UTM Bundle

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