



Rainbow Hotels – The first Norwegian hotel chain to offer secure wireless access to guests and conference delegates

Rainbow Hotels was the first hotel chain in Norway to offer wireless access to guests and conference delegates. The wireless access solution from Aptilo Networks is already in place in 13 hotels throughout Norway.

The chain consists of 45 hotels, of which 41 are situated in 22 cities throughout the country. The remaining hotels are located in Brussels and in Rotterdam. Rainbow Hotels is also a part of Golden Tulip Worldwide, an international hotel chain comprising more than 275 hotels in 200 destinations and 46 countries. Rainbow Hotels offers the larger and broader market hotel accommodation including apartment service. Two brands are marketed within Rainbow Hotels; Golden Tulip Hotels are superior, first class hotels in business destinations and resort areas (four-star), whilst Tulip Inns are comfortable three-star establishments. Each hotel maintains its individuality and local character.

WLAN services gives Rainbow Hotels a competitive advantage

We asked sales- and marketing director Eva Hagby in Rainbow Hotels to explain why they had installed wireless local area networks (WLAN) in their hotels, and how this is benefiting their guests and other users of the facilities:

– The management in Rainbow Hotels is always looking for technology that will increase the attractiveness of the hotels and at the same time make the stay more efficient and pleasurable for our guests. A lot of our clients, whether they are guests or conference delegates, are business people who have a need for simple and secure high-speed access to e-mail, the Internet and their corporate information. The advantages are many. The guests can access these services anywhere in the hotels without worrying about cables, annoying technicalities or slow download time. The secure wireless access zones will provide our guests with connections that are faster than ISDN or ADSL, and much cheaper than using mobile phones or the fixed lines in the rooms.

– Furthermore, providing wireless access to travelers is starting to become a “must have” within the hotel and conference sector. Surveys conducted in Europe shows that more than 50% of business travelers would use wireless access services if they were available. Similar surveys conducted by the Norwegian mobile operator, Telenor Mobil, conclude that 4 out of 10 visitors would use these services if they were available in hotels.

– During May 2002 we entered into an agreement with Telenor Mobil concerning the deployment of WLAN in our hotels and conference centers located in the largest cities throughout Norway. The feedback from our visitors has been very positive and it is not only early adopters that are using the solution. A lot of today’s PCs and PDAs have built-in support for WLAN access which makes the services even more accessible. Furthermore, a lot of visitors like to be associated with a hotel that is in the forefront of technology. We are experiencing increasing demand for these services, and being the first hotel chain in Norway to offer them has given us a competitive advantage, says Hagby.

Simplicity is the key to success

The services are easy to administer. Users that do not have WLAN access cards can rent them in the reception. In addition to this, guests need to purchase a 24-hour access pass at a cost of NOK 150, – Guests with a premium subscription from Telenor Mobil do not have to purchase an access card, but will be billed automatically via their normal phone bill.

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