



Updating History at The Greenbrier

CASE STUDY

As a national historic landmark established in 1778, The Greenbrier is an ultra-luxury resort where heritage, architectural magnificence, and unrivaled service join to provide a superior guest experience. Nestled in the Allegheny Mountains at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, the 6500-acre resort offers over 700 rooms and guest houses, over 40 meeting rooms and a conference center, a world-class spa, three championship golf courses, indoor and outdoor tennis courts, sport shooting and equestrian facilities, and much more. But until recently, one thing it didn't offer was seamless cellular service throughout its property.

The Greenbrier has always focused on providing luxury in a historic setting, but its technology services have lagged over the years. Now, the resort has launched a program designed to ensure that its technological capabilities are on par with its charm and its heritage. The first priority was to deploy an in-building wireless solution from ADC to eliminate cellular coverage holes in public areas and back-of-the-house facilities.



Thick Walls, Thin Wireless Coverage

Part of The Greenbrier's charm is its lush green setting in West Virginia. The resort is located in a rural area where cell towers are relatively few and far between. The facility still receives adequate coverage in its outdoor areas from carrier U.S. Cellular. Inside the building, however it's a different story.

The main building at The Greenbrier has thick concrete walls—and some facilities (including the spa, indoor pool, conference rooms and kitchen) are all or partially underground.

"Our guest and staff cell phones worked in the guest rooms and some of the lower public areas near the windows, but the signal tailed off when you moved toward the inside of the building," says Mike Keatley, director of IT at The Greenbrier.

Keatley knew that the resort would be closed for general renovations during the first quarter of 2007, so he decided it would be an ideal time to upgrade cellular coverage. "The upgrade was really for our guests, but some of our local providers offer push-to-talk services and we wanted to have the infrastructure in place to use services like that with our staff if we chose to do so," he says.

In the summer of 2006, Keatley and his team had consulted with AT&T through a referral from The Greenbrier's parent company, CSX. The team wanted pervasive cellular coverage in parts of the facility where it didn't currently exist, but there were other criteria as well. "We wanted a multi-carrier infrastructure so we could offer mobile voice and data services to all of our guests. We also had to have a system that could be deployed fairly quickly and unobtrusively so it didn't spoil the look of our ceilings," he says.

The AT&T experts recommended ADC's InterReach® Fusion system to best address The Greenbrier's needs. ADC has supplied hundreds of AT&T customers in-building coverage across America, so the recommendation was based on long experience.

Unwired for Opening Day

The ADC team designed an InterReach Fusion system consisting of a main hub (deployed in the resort's data center), two expansion hubs in wiring closets, and 12 remote antennas to the conference rooms, indoor pool and spa, ballrooms, theater, and lower lobbies as well as the kitchen and other "back-of-the-house" areas.

The Fusion system's architecture simplified deployment. Since it uses thin CATV cabling to distribute the wireless signal in and around the facility from the hub to remote antenna units, the cabling could be pulled within existing utility raceways rather than forcing major work on the ceilings. The deployment was finished in plenty of time for the resort's staff to test it while they prepared to reopen the hotel in April, 2007.

Since the property re-opened, coverage problems have disappeared. "People who come to resorts like The Greenbrier expect to have every convenience," says Keatley, "and that means having their cellular phones work wherever they are. Deploying the Fusion system has given us the opportunity to really expand our cellular coverage in underserved public areas. And it's also helped us in the kitchen and other operational locations."

Keatley is expecting deployment of a Verizon Wireless base station soon to add that carrier to the system, and he hopes others will follow soon after that. Even now, though, the ADC infrastructure has formed the first solid foundation of a technical renaissance at the venerable Greenbrier.

"This has been a great addition to the resort, simply because it starts the process of bringing our technology systems up to date with what our guests expect," says Keatley. "The Fusion system gives us the opportunity to provide cell coverage that matches the high level of leisure and conference services we offer everywhere else."



Challenges

- Improve inadequate cellular coverage inside lower-level public facilities and service areas at historic resort
- Support multiple carriers
- Blend in with historic decor
- Avoid guest disruptions

Solution

- Multi-carrier, in-building wireless system brings high-performance coverage to selected areas with one set of electronics
- Deployed during remodeling closure
- Unobtrusive, flush-mount remote antennas blend in with decor



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