

Telstra ensures Hilton can rest assured



‘Unlike other companies, Telstra does not try to fit a square peg in a round hole. Its approach is always to create and combine products for us that fit our business needs.’

Rhonda Vanderwood, Director, Networks and Communications, Hilton.

When Conrad Hilton purchased his first hotel in Cisco, Texas, back in 1919, little did he know that ‘Hilton’ would become the best known hotel brand in the world.

Hilton International, which holds the rights outside North America to the world’s most powerful hotel brand, operates more than 400 hotels and employs 65,000 staff in over 70 countries. 250 of its hotels carry the Hilton brand, 150 the Scandic mid-market brand and a further 15 are luxury Conrad hotels. Through its global marketing alliance with Hilton Hotels Corporation in North America it offers a total hotel network of over 2400 properties.

Why Telstra?

Telstra first began working with Hilton International in 1994, initially securing the contract to provide voice services. Telstra was chosen for its innovation, flexibility and dedication to delivering a highly tailored solution to meet Hilton’s specific needs, rather than simply offering an off-the-shelf package.

A fast, effective reservation system is at the heart of any hotel business – large or small. A customer naturally expects to be given an instant and accurate answer in response to a question on room availability and staff need to have the correct information to hand.

In 1998 Hilton was planning the introduction of an upgraded system in order to make their reservations process faster and more efficient. This, together with the development of a new centralised finance application and

Year 2000 compliance requirements, led the hotel group to tender for the delivery and implementation of a new IP network which would link its hotels across the world.

Whilst Telstra had been working effectively with Hilton on the voice side, they were by no means guaranteed the business. However, once again their flexibility, innovation, pricing and tailored approach won through and, against the major players in the market, they secured this important development.

The Success

Hilton’s commitment to Telstra continues. It has signed a further 5 year contract and Telstra’s most recent project has been to implement Hilton’s move from Frame Relay to MPLS in order to ensure direct connectivity across its hotel sites.

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CASE STUDY

The Services

Voice

Outbound – Telstra delivers outbound calling from Hilton’s head office for fast, low-cost worldwide communication

Calling Cards - customised pre-programmed Calling Cards are used by senior Hilton staff in order to get direct access (and bypass IVR) to any of their hotels from anywhere in the world

International Marketing Services – Hilton use a mix of Telstra’s 0870 (national), 0845 (local) and international toll-free numbers to help customers get in contact quickly and easily. In addition, Universal numbers are utilised to enable customers to contact Reservations Departments on single memorable numbers from wherever they might be calling across the world.

Mobile - Telstra provides a cost effective mobile solution as part of its overall telecoms package. This ensures that Hilton board members can stay in touch when travelling world-wide.

Roaming - Remote access is also provided so that staff can quickly and easily stay in touch from home.

Data

Frame Relay – Telstra’s Frame Relay was the original method that Hilton used in order to ensure its new reservations and finance systems could be accessed and analysed by staff throughout their hotel network. Flexible band-width enabled the system to adapt to Hilton’s needs e.g. during busy booking periods.

X.25 network – this was used in conjunction with Frame Relay to enable connection to Hilton hotels in countries where Frame Relay wasn’t available, for example, Egypt.

Dial-up IP – simple but necessary phones and modems were used to complete the data loop and ensure hotels in less developed countries, for example Indonesia, were connected to the new reservation and finance applications.

Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) enabled IP network – the new system provides Hilton with a tailored one-stop solution that directly connects all its hotels without having to spend time and money creating its own network.

Billing

Telstra delivers a customised billing solution that provides bills directly to individual hotels across the world, together with a consolidated bill submitted to head office.