

## Excelsior Palace Hotel



### HIGHLIGHTS

The Excelsior Palace Hotel is a 5-star luxury hotel on the Portofino coast of Italy

A full-stack solution (APs, MS, and security appliances.) was deployed in 3 weeks

MR72s for the outdoor terraces, swimming pools and the entire beach area; and MR33s



The Excelsior Palace Hotel is a 5-star luxury hotel on the Portofino coast of Italy. With its expansive views of the Italian Riviera, fine dining, and wellness treatments, the hotel attracts guests seeking the finest holiday experience. Additionally, it hosts business visitors attending conferences hosted at the hotel event facilities.

To meet the high expectations of the hotel's visitors, Aldo Werdin, Managing Director and General Manager, knew he needed to offer the best Wi-Fi possible. The hotel's previous network solution was slow and had unreliable coverage. To make matters worse, it was nearly impossible for staff to establish the source of any problems on the network. When it became clear the existing infrastructure was not satisfactory, Werdin decided to deploy an entirely new solution.

To this end, Werdin chose Cisco Meraki cloud-managed IT solutions to power the entire property, which dates to 1901 and additionally includes cabanas, a beach club, multiple outdoor pools, a restaurant, and spa.

Werdin worked with his technology partner to evaluate various solutions. He requested a solution that would be simple to implement (as the hotel does not have an IT team on site), yet powerful enough to service the needs of the hotel. As it happened, the owner/manager of a nearby hotel first told Werdin about Meraki. Werdin was intrigued by the benefits of cloud-managed IT, particularly the simplified management and deployment.

He gave Meraki a try, and experienced for himself the ease of the Meraki dashboard. The "extraordinary simplicity of control and management" made a big impression on Werdin.

But what really won him over was the range of services included with Meraki, including 24/7 technical support, robust product warranties, and automatic upgrades. These features, included with all Meraki licensing, made Werdin's life much easier.

The Excelsior Palace has a full-stack Meraki solution, including access points, switches, and security appliances. Over a three week period, the hotel deployed a variety of models, throughout the property to provide the best coverage for each area. "The deployment was clean, fast, and transparent," Werdin said.

"Combining all Meraki products not only allows for a unique visibility into our networks, but also makes it much simpler to customise settings for our needs," Werdin said.

The network deployment has high-performance MR42s for various conference rooms and reception lounge; ruggedised MR72s for the outdoor terraces, swimming pools and the entire beach area; and MR33s for guest rooms and hallways.

Access points support Layer 3 roaming, allowing users to pass from one AP to another without loss of signal. Access-list rules on the firewall keep staff traffic, both wired and Wi-Fi, separate from that of guests. Visitors access the Internet via a dedicated guest SSID, which is password protected and accessible from anywhere on the property. Using the Dashboard, staff can generate up to 15 SSIDs to dedicate custom access to conference rooms and conference visitors. Finally, across all APs, bandwidth and content control, configured in a few mouse clicks, keep the network safe and speedy.

"The Dashboard has helped my employees a lot," Werdin said. "We can create custom SSIDs for the conferencing company; change the password for the guest SSID; and run marketing analyses to verify the use of Wi-Fi, attendance, and the most popular areas of the property."

Fiber optic 100Mb Internet connectivity is connected to MX84 firewalls in High Availability (HA) mode. Meraki MS switches are connected to the redundant security appliance configuration, from which copper cables go out to various offices inside and outside the main hotel building. The firewall has been customized for the hotel's needs and provides granular visibility and control, powerful antivirus features, and bandwidth tuning based on applications and protocols. The property has also deployed MX security appliances.

Now, not only is it easier for Werdin to address any issues that arise—it's also possible to prevent such issues.

"We are absolutely happy with Meraki," Werdin said, "as are our customers."