



Multisite Deployment & Network Cutover: Major International Hotel Operator

Industry Background:

Hotel merger and acquisition (M&A) deals continue to trend upward, with major operators looking to expand their portfolios by acquiring smaller regional chains. Once an M&A deal is finalized, there is typically an effort to reconfigure existing properties to meet branding and other standards. Often, computers, point-of-sale (POS) systems and other IT equipment must be upgraded or replaced to integrate with the acquiring company's applications and ensure consistency across the environment.

Project Summary:

A major international hotel operator had recently acquired a chain with more than 100 properties worldwide. The operator was looking to rapidly integrate those properties into its network over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. This required the replacement of IT equipment and the simultaneous cutover with the Internet service provider (ISP) across all sites.

The operator's value-added reseller (VAR) partner had contracted with a firm to handle the upgrade of 80 of the sites, and asked SirviS to develop a proposal for several of the larger locations. At that time, SirviS declined to do the work on two of the properties due to the logistical challenges associated with the holiday weekend. The other provider agreed to handle all of the sites and was awarded the entire project.

However, the hotel operator's VAR was informed at the 11th hour that the provider could not complete the 18 locations. The VAR contacted SirviS on the Sunday before Thanksgiving and asked for assistance. SirviS planned the entire project within one business day, and assembled teams of engineers and technicians to handle the implementation and coordinate the network cutover.

Project Specifics:

The SirviS team met early on the Monday before Thanksgiving, and by Tuesday had the entire project planned. Teams of three or four people, including one supervisor to lead the effort, were deployed to each site. The project was centrally managed from SirviS headquarters.

The project involved the replacement of POS equipment, routers and switches, and firewalls, and burn-in, imaging and software installation on the new workstations. However, SirviS was unable to visit the sites prior to launching the project due to time constraints and COVID-19 restrictions. SirviS had to rely on the customer's estimate of the average number of workstations per site, how long the cable runs were from each POS system back to the networking closet, and other details. If the actual onsite configuration differed, the teams had to adjust on the fly.

The ISP specified a two-hour window between 10:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. for the network cutover. The SirviS teams coordinated their efforts to ensure that Internet connectivity was available across all sites. The customer also asked SirviS to remain onsite for two more days to provide ongoing support for hotel staff who were unfamiliar with the new equipment.

Results:

All 18 properties, which were located throughout the U.S., in Canada and in Central America, were upgraded within the three-day Thanksgiving weekend. There were minimal problems at the sites SirviS handled, despite the very limited amount of time for planning. The customer was pleased with the results and SirviS' ability to deliver on short notice and in a compressed timeframe.