

# Guests give Sheraton Grand Taipei high marks for new network

## CUSTOMER

Sheraton Grand Taipei Hotel

## COUNTRY

Taipei, Taiwan

## CHALLENGES

- Deliver high-capacity wireless performance throughout the 19-story hotel
- Support bandwidth-intensive applications, like high-speed media streaming
- Monitor all APs/switches from a single dashboard

## SOLUTIONS

- 750 RUCKUS APs
- ICX switches
- SmartZone network controllers

## RESULTS

- Reduced guest-reported network issues 92 percent
- Improved the brand's overall satisfaction ratings 19 percent
- Simplified network management and reduced costs

## Overview

As a five-star Marriott International hotel, the Sheraton Grand in Taipei, Taiwan, understands the value of a superior guest experience. The hotel is nearly 40 years old but, when it comes to delivering the wireless connectivity and convenience guests expect, the



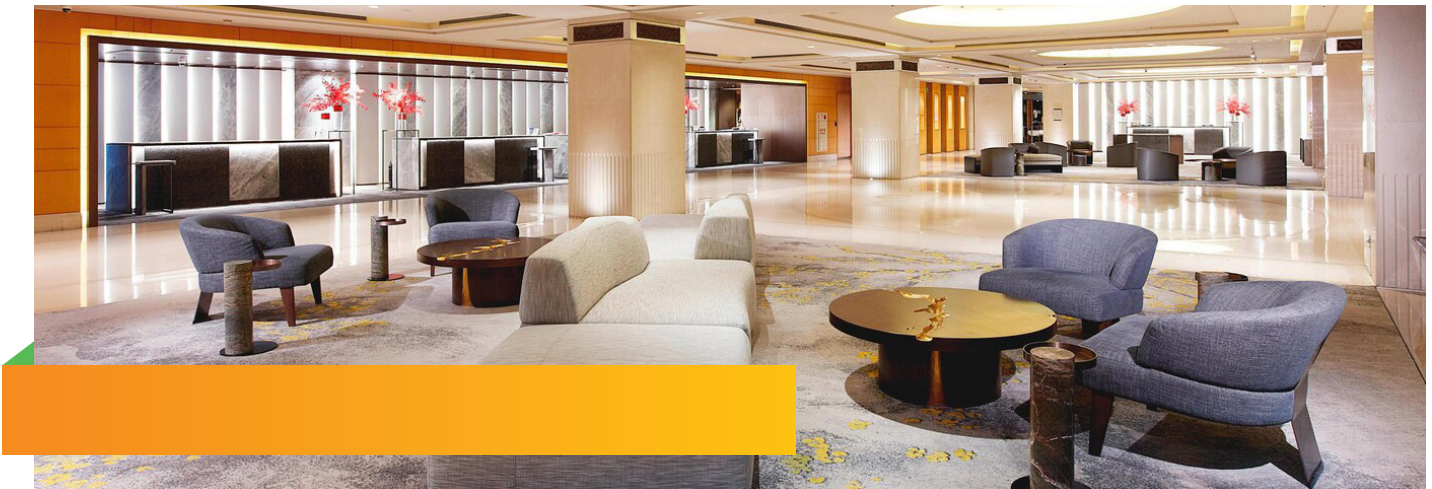
Sheraton Grand Taipei has established a high standard for performance.

Over the past several years, more bandwidth-hungry applications and services have led to rising demand for faster, more ubiquitous Wi-Fi access. The legacy Wi-Fi network was being pushed beyond its limits—threatening the hotel's reputation and the integrity of the Marriott brand. The Sheraton Grand Taipei's IT department acted quickly. Inspired by the performance and management capabilities of CommScope's RUCKUS Wi-Fi portfolio, they turned to CommScope for a network refresh to carry the hotel into the future.

## High-speed network draws praise and revenue

Since 2002, Sheraton Grand Taipei has been managed by My Humble House Hospitality Management Consulting Co., whose "art is life, life is art," philosophy has helped the hotel become a cornerstone of Taipei's posh Zhongzheng District. Today, the Sheraton Grand Taipei offers a luxurious blend of aesthetics, accommodations and cuisine for business guests and those traveling for pleasure. Its Wi-Fi network is central to the guest experience.

"Not long ago, customer demands on the wireless network were mainly limited



to browsing for local information online or sending emails. Today, guests want to stream media from their mobile devices to the TV, take advantage of virtual concierge services and more,” said Allen Chang, senior director of Corporate IT of My Humble House Hospitality Management Consulting.

Recently—as in-room entertainment, mobile-based guest services and demand for more Wi-Fi bandwidth and reliability have sky-rocketed—the hotel’s older Wi-Fi network showed it was no longer up to the task. It lacked the capacity and coverage needed and, without centralized management, IT could not monitor the network’s performance or status.

At the end of 2017, the hotel was scheduled for a significant renovation of its guest rooms. It was the perfect opportunity to overhaul the wireless network as well.

## Vendor search leads to CommScope and their RUCKUS portfolio

Chang and his staff spent the last few months of 2017 interviewing Marriott-approved vendors to find the right partner and technology solution. In addition to the total cost of ownership, their concerns included ensuring the network solution provided reliable high-capacity performance, centralized network management and a proven track record of successful deployments in the hospitality industry. After a rigorous analysis, the team selected CommScope and its RUCKUS Wi-Fi portfolio.

“RUCKUS APs and switches have an excellent reputation in the hotel industry and easily passed our proof-of-concept field test. Add in CommScope’s global strength and technical support,

and the CommScope/RUCKUS solution quickly rose to the top of the list,” explained Kuo-ling Chang .

Specifically, the team focused in on the RUCKUS APs, supported by the RUCKUS SmartZone controller [and switches/cabling]. During the POC test, the APs demonstrated exceptional signal coverage and connection stability.

The ultra-high-density APs work together to automatically sense and adjust to changes in capacity demand; they also eliminate co-channel interference. This makes them perfect for high-density areas, like the Sheraton Grand Taipei’s main wedding space that accommodates 1,400. As guests move through the hotel, RUCKUS SmartRoam+ technology enables the network to intelligently, quickly and seamlessly recognize and connect guests’ wireless devices.

With CommScope’s RUCKUS SmartZone network controller, IT staff could also manage the wired and wireless networks through a single console. This enables them to proactively monitor the operation and status of all access points and switches instead of waiting to respond to guest service issues.

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**Kuo-ling Chang**

**Senior Director of Corporate IT  
My Humble House Hospitality Management Consulting**

## Network upgrade yields immediate results

The 19-story Sheraton Grand Taipei has a total of 688 guest rooms, eight international restaurants, a pub, eight meeting rooms totaling over 18,000 square feet, fitness facilities and a significant number of common areas. Ensuring ubiquitous coverage and capacity across the entire property involved 750 APs, ICX switches and SmartZone network controllers.

The project team decided to deploy the network in two phases. Phase one was a test phase—involving APs, switches and network controllers—to confirm that the network's signal coverage, stability and performance met guests' wireless needs. After this initial phase, the IT staff immediately began to notice a decrease in guest-reported network issues.

Phase two of the deployment began in March 2018 and was completed seven months later.

Three months after deployment, the number of guest-reported Wi-Fi issues per quarter dropped from 49 to four, a 92-percent decrease. According to Marriott's corporate website, customer satisfaction has surged from 48.1 points to 57.3 points.

Network management has also dramatically improved.

"Modifying 200 guest-room SSIDs to work with our scheduling systems used to take over a week; now, it only takes 10 minutes," Kuo-ling Chang said. IT can quickly check the quality of any network connection from any web-enabled device, instead of having to rely on a physical inspection by the housekeeping staff. So network maintenance cost and response times have both dropped.

## Looking to the future

The success of Sheraton Grand Taipei's new network is now extending beyond the hotel itself. My Humble House Hospitality Management Consulting Co., Ltd., also owns several well-known hotels in the area, including Le Méridien Taipei, Humble House Taipei and Jiao Xi Hotel.

The stability and performance of the CommScope RUCKUS network have convinced My Humble House Group IT Director Allen Chang to deploy the same Wi-Fi solution at the company's other properties.

"The CommScope RUCKUS solution will enable us to provide guests with consistent Wi-Fi service while greatly reducing the time, cost and resources needed to manage, provision and troubleshoot the network," Chang mentioned.

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