

CASESTUDY

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Realising the benefits

When Ascot Racecourse decided on new IT, communications and cabling infrastructure it chose Redstone Converged Solutions and gained world class capabilities for informing and entertaining its customers.

“We selected Redstone as they fully understood our needs and demonstrated their expertise, both in the underlying technology we specified, and with a greater breadth of project experience than many of their competitors. In retrospect we could not have picked a better team.”

Sonia Hamilton,
Head of ICT, Ascot Racecourse

ASCOT

ASCOT MAKES A SAFE BET WITH REDSTONE

The client

Ascot Racecourse in Berkshire has a history dating back to 1711. Most famous for the five days of racing that make up Royal Ascot week, the site is operated by Ascot Racecourse Limited.

The challenge

Ascot needed a future proof infrastructure to serve the evolving needs of race goers, service partners and stakeholders – trainers, jockeys and the media. With up to 300,000 visitors during Royal Ascot, scalability and resilience for both commercial and public safety reasons were key.

Historically cabling at Ascot had been a challenge. TV crews would regularly be stringing miles of cable for camera connections. Caterers Sodexo, the Tote and other bookmakers would all require expensive fixed line phone systems for credit card validation and reporting systems, which cost them line rental fees and tied them to a limited range of locations on site.

The new infrastructure had to provide the connectivity needed for communications, broadcast media, IT and public safety and provide an infrastructure that would cope with evolving services.

“We did not want to see coax in the walls that would become a redundant talking point in a few years,” said Sonia Hamilton, Head of ICT at Ascot Racecourse. “The technology here needs to facilitate every aspect of our business, from intra race activities to maximising the race excitement, adding the ‘wow factor’ to the day for our customers.”



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The results

- 20% saved on the site wide cabling budget.
- Improved customer service and information access.
- Flexible, instantly deployed commercial facilities.
- Increased profitability for service partners.
- First racecourse globally with a single wireless solution covering the entire site.

For further information please call us on
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The solution

Redstone’s systems design, cabling planning and installation required coordination with twenty seven other companies to complete the roll out for the entire Ascot site in fourteen weeks.

In a first for a racecourse anywhere in the world, Ascot provides a single wireless solution for all organisations to use at the racecourse, proactively managed onsite by Redstone, which undertook complete airspace management. With vital systems including the photo finish equipment and, uniquely, all 550 Tote betting terminals connected by Wi-Fi, failure of this network would be unthinkable.

Monitoring of the network also extends off site, with Redstone Managed Solutions providing a 24/7 remote watch, working closely with Ascot’s team to ensure systems are always operational.

The outcome

Ascot’s ‘wow factor’ is immediate. New entry turnstiles plug straight into the IP network and speed up access for visitors, delivering a more accurate count of the people in any one area allowing Ascot to sell more tickets and enabling lost tickets to be replaced securely.

Once onsite, guests are kept up to date via 1600 IP enabled TV monitors which display race information, live views, instant replays and information on catering and safety.

“Our partners can now just walk in and work,” says Hamilton. Tote, for example, can now use secure Wi-Fi betting terminals providing more outlets in locations that they previously could not cover without the cost of leasing BT lines, upping the total number of bets placed.

Trainers eager to see the details of their horse’s performance are now delivered a DVD of the race within minutes, while in the media centre journalists can enjoy streamed instant replays of each of the day’s races and high bandwidth connections for filing stories.

Ascot has also directly benefited from Redstone’s network, through new revenue streams generated. “The real return on investment is being able to do and offer things that we were never able to before,” said Hamilton. We are attracting more non race day clients as events teams can just turn up, plug and play, and they no longer need to spend hours cabling and configuring systems.”

“We got what we needed as a result of in-depth consultation from the Redstone team” says Hamilton. “On other comparable sites you just see one or maybe two aspects of what we have been able to deploy in full through having built such a solid foundation, with Redstone.”