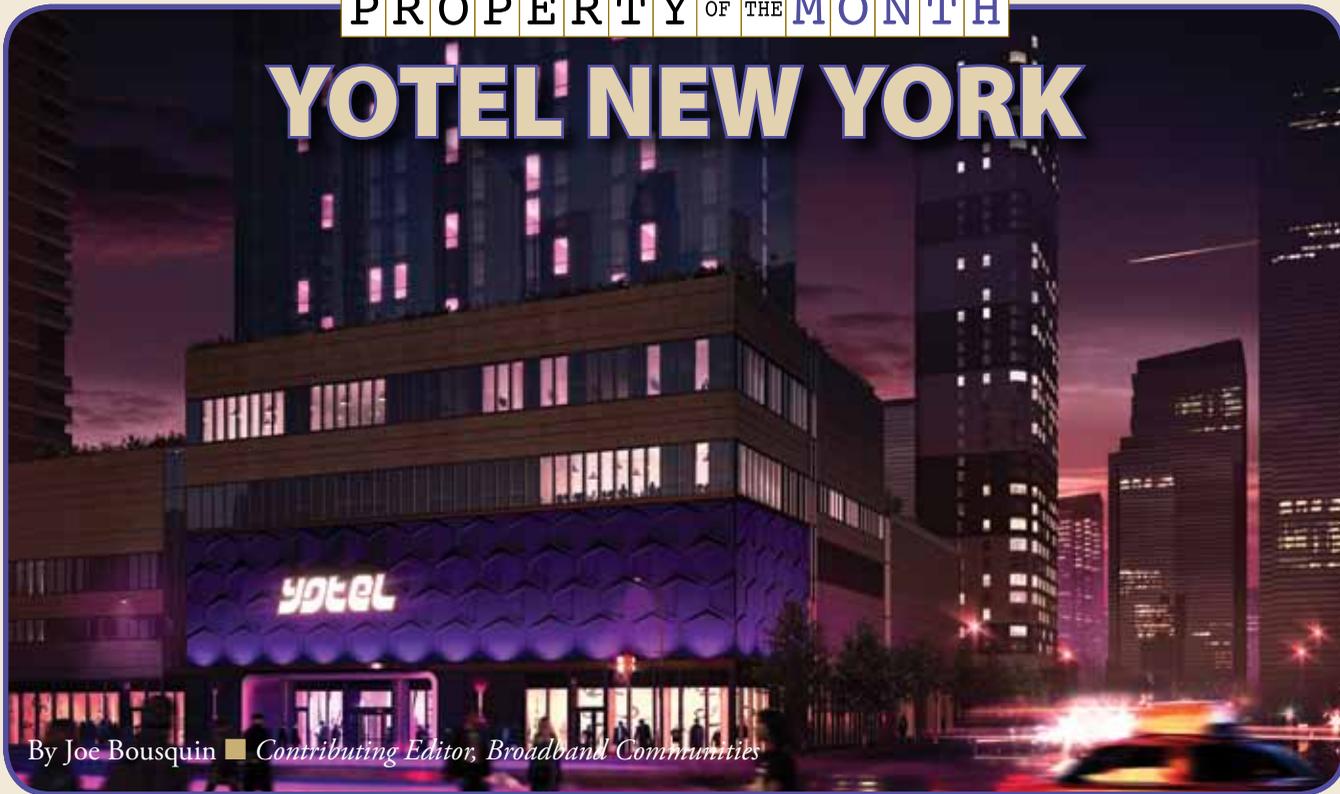


YOTEL NEW YORK



By Joe Bousquin ■ *Contributing Editor, Broadband Communities*

In this issue, **BROADBAND COMMUNITIES** features YOTEL, a futuristic hotel near New York City's Times Square that's taking wireless to new heights in all its 669 rooms. Our thanks to Spot On Networks' Dick Sherwin and YOTEL's Louise O'Brien and David Chu for their assistance in preparing this feature.

Earning a reputation as the hippest new hotel near the epicenter of one of the world's great cities requires more than a modern design fused with clean lines and indirect lighting. Today's on-the-go travelers also expect all the right amenities, from the comfort of their pillow-top queen-sized beds to the super-fast download speeds on their iPads.

YOTEL New York, the newest offering from the London-based YO! Company, can offer both to the eclectic mix of business and leisure travelers who walk through its doors. The property scores high in the cool column – it sports a futuristic, though art deco-inspired, look and offers the services of the YOBOT, a robotic concierge, to help guests check in. It is also at the cutting edge of connectivity, boasting a next-generation wireless network that distributes speed, along with security, into every corner of the hotel.

Through a team effort from New Haven, Conn.-based Spot On Networks,

the 669-unit YOTEL offers tiered Internet connectivity as an amenity to its guests. The system is fed by the building's active Ethernet fiber backbone.

The tiered speed offerings – guests can get 7 Mbps or 10 Mbps symmetric speeds, based on room selection – demonstrate YOTEL's philosophy. The company, founded by London restaurateur Simon Woodroffe, owner of the YO! Sushi chain, strives to extend the tiered amenity packaging of air travel to a hotel stay. Guests can choose from premium, first-class and VIP rooms. Checking in through the YOTEL's automated system in the lobby simultaneously launches a tiered service-level agreement based on the room class, which automatically extends the 7 Mbps package to guests in

premium rooms and 10 Mbps speeds to those in first-class or VIP suites.

By deploying 151 wireless access points throughout the hotel, Spot On ensured that guests have all the bandwidth they need for the exponentially multiplying Wi-Fi-enabled devices they're taking on the road today.

"YOTEL has recognized the need for Wi-Fi in every single room," says Dick Sherwin, Spot On's CEO. "Because of the widespread use of iPads, Wi-Fi-enabled phones and other devices, you're seeing a shift away from the traditional entertainment systems that a hotel would normally provide in a room. Guests are bringing their own entertainment devices with them, which means you're starting to see more and more

About the Author

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YOTEL's stripped-down décor is reminiscent of a cabin on a ship or an airplane; the rooms are small but functional and comfortable.

High-rise/mid-rise/garden style?:

High-rise

Date services started being delivered:

June 2011

TECHNOLOGY

How does fiber get to the property? Fiber backhaul is supplied by RCN Corporation, a Herndon, Va.-based broadband services provider that

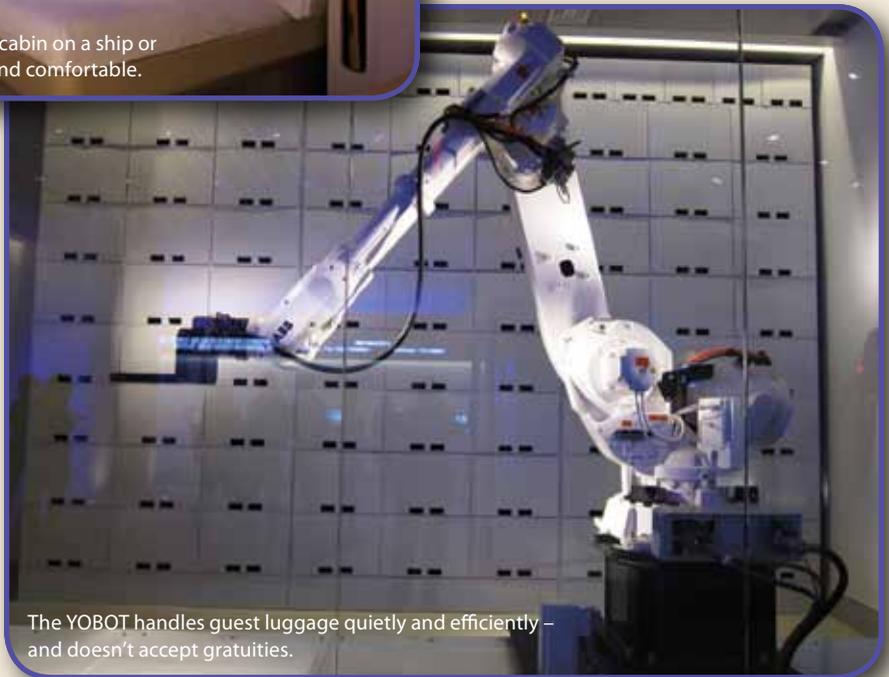
devices that utilize only Wi-Fi, versus an RJ-45 Internet connection.”

Although the rooms do provide wired connection points, the wireless access points are the focus of the system and are secured accordingly. Through a proprietary system Spot On dubs User-Safe, the network prevents wireless devices from communicating directly with one another, a step that significantly increases the difficulty of spoofing, hacking and scanning of other users.

“Unless you designate two devices through their unique MAC addresses, you’d have to go all the way out to the Internet, and then come back in, to try to access someone else on the network,” Sherwin says. “That makes it a lot harder.”

VITAL STATISTICS

Property Description: YOTEL New York, the YO! Company’s flagship city center hotel, is located just two blocks west of Times Square in New York City. Inspired by air-travel concepts of tiered amenity offerings, such as premium and first-class “cabins,” YOTEL New York opened in June 2011, building on the firm’s development of several European airport locations. YOTEL New York cabins are 30 percent larger than the airport product and come with floor-to-ceiling windows. There are three main cabin types: premium cabins with queen-size beds; first-class cabins with king-size beds, private terraces and hot tubs; and all-inclusive, double-cabin VIP suites, the ultimate luxury. The hotel, designed



The YOBOT handles guest luggage quietly and efficiently – and doesn’t accept gratuities.

by Rockwell Group of New York in collaboration with Softroom of London, features 20,000 square feet of flexible and dynamic entertainment space, including the largest hotel terrace in the city.

Greenfield or retrofit? Greenfield

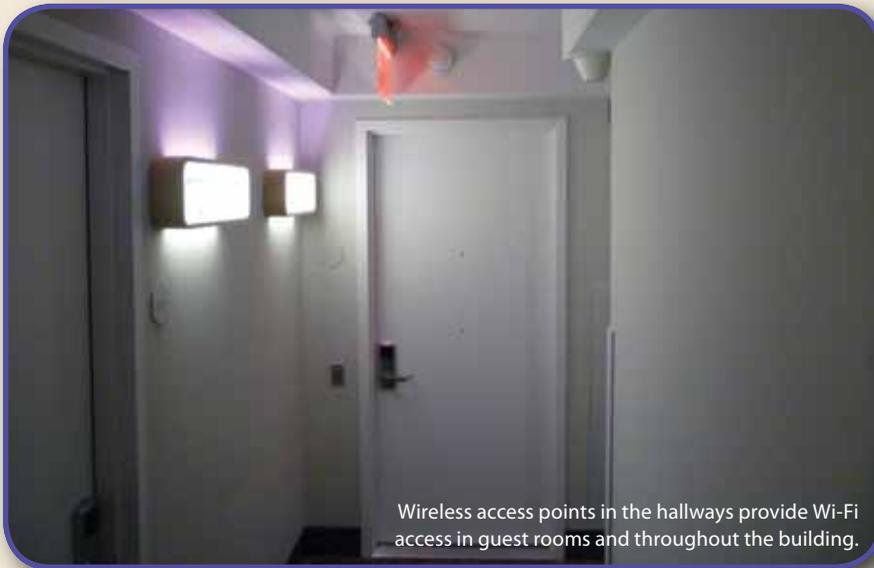
Number of units: 669

operates in Philadelphia, Boston, New York City and Washington, D.C. Spot On Networks provides all wired and wireless communications services inside the property.

How is fiber distributed inside the building? From the main demarcation point, fiber strands feed into vertical risers that lead to intermediate distri-

**PROPERTY OF THE MONTH HIGHLIGHTS
YOTEL NEW YORK**

- 669-room hotel in Times Square features airplane-style design.
- RCN provides bandwidth for the active Ethernet fiber backbone.
- 151 secured wireless access points designed and managed by Spot On Networks accommodate guest iPads and smartphones; guests use their own Netflix accounts.
- Vendors include HP, Engenius and Apple.



bution frame (IDF) closets. Link aggregation is employed on three floors via four pairs of fibers.

What is the FTTH technology?

Active Ethernet

What type of gear is used?

HP ProCurve switches with gigabit interface converters and small-form-factor pluggables.

How did you deal with wiring and plug access within the units? Wiring was done by a third-party contractor during construction. The RJ-54 jacks are below the desks and behind the flat-panel TVs. A patch cord was run up behind each desk to a wall-mounted phone that has a 100 Mbps



First-floor distribution frame

Ethernet port built into it.

Have you provided wireless signals within units? Yes. Wireless signal is distributed throughout the building from Engenius 9550 access points in the hallways on the guest-room floors.

The amenity and back-of-house areas have access points on the ceilings. All areas of the hotel, except for the basement, are covered with Wi-Fi.

How much square footage is dedicated to the network inside the building? Could closets be shared with other utilities? At the demarcation point and on every third floor, a full rack is dedicated to communications equipment. Space was limited, so the service provider had to work closely with the property owner to ensure that equipment would fit and that power and ventilation were adequate.

SERVICES

Does the building have triple-play services? In addition to Internet bandwidth, RCN provides video through a fiber optic feed. YOTEL offers TV service in all units at no charge to guests. The channel lineup includes a variety of high-definition channels, standard channels, and news, sports, entertainment and movie channels. In-cabin IP phones also provide guests with a wired way of connecting through the Internet service.

Apple TV is provided in all VIP

suites. This allows guests to stream music and movies using their own iTunes and Netflix accounts.

Are there amenities beyond the triple play?

Wireless is free on all guest floors as well as in public areas. Business center PCs with printing capabilities are available at no cost to guests. These PCs are equipped with built-in cameras and microphones for videoconferencing.

The club cabin and boardroom are fully equipped with flat-screen televisions, speaker phones and adapters that allow guests to connect any device to a TV via VGA, RCA or HDMI. In-cabin lights are controlled by motion sensors.

The StudiYO room is a multi-function space equipped with a state-of-the-art sound system that includes multifunction speakers; a projector; wireless, wearable and handheld microphones; RCN TV service; Apple TV; an iPod docking station; and video and audio inputs that allow the connection of any device via VGA or HDMI. A fully loaded portable DJ booth can be installed on several locations on the fourth floor.

Who is the wireless service provider?

Spot On Networks



Fourth-floor distribution frame

Are other emerging IP services available?

Video monitoring is currently provided, and energy management is being considered.

Who provides support? If guests have an issue or a technical challenge, whom do they call? Spot On Networks

Who owns the network? YOTEL owns the cable network infrastructure, and Spot On owns the equipment and provides technical support.

ONSITE EXPERIENCE/ LESSONS LEARNED

What was the biggest challenge? Thanks to the help and support of Spot On Networks, challenges have been minimal, but the workload has been enormous. The biggest challenge was not having enough hotel staff to cover all the different areas and stress test all systems.

What was the biggest success? The major success was the relocation of all



Main distribution frame for YOTEL

computer equipment from the YO! Company's temporary office space to the hotel, which took a great deal of coordination and hard work. Guests are easily able to obtain access to the Internet through any of their devices anywhere in the hotel.

What would you say to owners who want to deploy a similar network? What issues should they consider before they get started? Spend more time on the network design and run the design through different scenarios until all areas are covered.

What is the hotel manager's perspective on this installation? Has it been a success? What has been the response from guests? There were some bumps in the beginning, as expected, but all these issues were corrected in a very short time. Currently, help tickets have been minimized, with most guests calling for help setting up their own equipment rather than because of problems. ❖

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