

CASE STUDY

Colruyt

Leading European retailer upgrades to Aerohive for large-scale deployment across hundreds of facilities



Colruyt

Established over 80 years ago as a family-run business, Colruyt has grown into the Colruyt Group – a thriving business with a large number of retail chains across four countries. Colruyt Group distributes food and general merchandise across Belgium, France and Luxembourg, with approximately 500 stores and more than 500 affiliated shops. The Group offers products for all phases in the lives of consumers.

Efficiency has always been critical to Colruyt. It's how they are able to operate at lower costs, and thereby offer the lowest prices. This is what Colruyt sought from its Wi-Fi network – low cost, high efficiency – to align with their operational excellence, while ensuring they remain innovative into the future.

The Challenge

Colruyt started looking for a new Wi-Fi solution because its previous provider could no longer meet its network needs. The provider introduced a new method for configuring the devices, which meant the majority of the legacy access points would no longer be supported. For Colruyt, this meant they had to rebuilding its network from scratch.

The primary problems to solve resided in the management limitations of the legacy platform – from configuring, managing, and monitoring the system. As there was no real management system with the legacy system, the IT team had to first log on before manually configuring the APs. This was a time-consuming exercise, particularly in view of the size and breadth of their network.

Moreover, monitoring was not centralized, so that also had to take place on the device itself. This meant that the team never had an accurate picture of how the Wi-Fi network was performing as a whole. As such, responsibility fell to the users to provide insight. In Colruyt's case, this was the customer. If the customer did not notify them of any disruptions, the IT team would not know of the problem – the IT team were completely reactive to their customers, not proactive.

The Solution

Colruyt started looking for a provider who could handle a large deployment of 8,000 access points across hundreds of sites. They needed to ensure the new Wi-Fi network could support all locations, including office environments, shops and the warehouses. Colruyt set the following requirements: 1) high stability of the connection; 2) a broad range of types of access points (for refrigerated and non-refrigerated environments, for example); 3) good manageability and unlimited scalability. Furthermore, the new network had to be futureproof, and therefore offer means for flexible modification in the event of future innovation.

Colruyt decided to implement Aerohive's Cloud Networking platform across all its locations. This meant that the team was setting a new standard, which was essential for realizing its brand promise: Operational excellence. This is hugely important for the brand in order to deliver on their "lowest price guarantee." All internal processes must be well streamlined and optimally facilitated.

"By using HiveManager, we now have a clear view of our full Wi-Fi environment– and all offices, warehouses, and stores are presented in a uniform way."

– Colruyt Spokesman,



The Solution (Continued)

The implementation is now in full swing. The office environment was completed first. Employees can now make use of Wi-Fi access under the same conditions as wired access in terms of speed and reach. Implementation in the shops is currently at 80% completed. At Colruyt, employees make use of Personal Digital Assistants to simplify tasks, including stocktaking and the management of waste in the case of products which have passed their sell-by date.

Colruyt will be rolling out access points in its warehouses in order to open up a world of optimization options there too. For example, being able to use wireless headsets to communicate within the team instead of using paper will deliver huge time and cost savings. Again, operational excellence.

The Results

Since using Aerohive, Colruyt has seen an increase in the reliability and manageability of the Wi-Fi network. As wireless is managed in the Cloud, there can no longer be a single point of failure. If an access point breaks now, there is sufficient residual cover from the other access points, and everything keeps working properly as it's managed from wherever it's needed. This means that fewer service engineers need be on standby or onsite for availability to be guaranteed.

With more processes dependent on the Wi-Fi network, Aerohive has been able to deliver continuous availability with a simple to deploy and manage Cloud network. This is critical, not just for employees but their customers as well. For example, Colruyt's SEQR app can only be used to pay for online groceries via the open Wi-Fi network for visitors. It's critical that network access is guaranteed.

Colruyt makes use of HiveManager™, Aerohive's network management platform. IT can now monitor the network from one single point, from wherever they work, which provides major efficiency advantages. In addition, the IT department can now proactively improve the performance of the network, which will increase operational excellence and drive up customer satisfaction.

Colruyt expects to complete the full implementation within the year. This will also be the starting point for further optimization and innovation, such as wireless telephony across it's shops and employees. Looking further into the future, the team wants to investigate how it can make use of the data collected over Wi-Fi to improve intelligence and efficiencies.

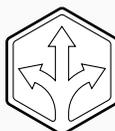
Aerohive's APIs allow this today in HiveManager, linking data from other systems. Colruyt sees this as an opportunity to bring innovation within reach, with the means to do it easily.

Why Colruyt Selected Aerohive



HiveManager™

Management options that provide major time and cost savings, and full insight into how Wi-Fi is performing as a whole



Unlimited Scalability

Future-proof network with flexible modification in the event of innovation



Operational Excellence

Time savings in terms of configuration and management, and fewer service engineers needed on standby

