

Case Study

FTTP on Demand Trimstone Manor Country House Hotel



Trimstone Manor Country House Hotel

Set within the beautiful North Devon countryside, the historic Trimstone Manor House Hotel is a magical location for guests. Offering a range of facilities, as well as ensuite rooms, self-catering cottages and a restaurant serving seasonal and local cuisine, guests can enjoy the beautiful gardens and grounds at their leisure while being ideally situated to explore this popular coastal area.

One drawback of the hotel's picturesque but rural location has always been the slow broadband speeds, as the owner Philip Milton explains, "After experimenting with various different applications, processes, twisted wires, line-of-sight and separate telephone lines, we still found that Internet access could be very slow, intermittent and unreliable and it is just at these most important of times that you or your customers need it when it goes down."

The problems faced at Trimstone are common across the hospitality industry where both business and leisure travellers have high expectations of fast and reliable wireless Internet connectivity.

Philip knows exactly what his customers expect. "These days, people on holiday need access to the Internet and they need to know it is reliable and speedy. When I am on holiday, I have to keep in touch and work and many others have to do so too. Indeed, for entertainment – or for their children, it is becoming imperative."



FTTP on Demand

Fibre to the Premises on Demand (FTTPoD) is an ultrafast broadband service offering 300Mbps down and 30Mbps up. Unlike traditional broadband, FTTP is an end-to-end fibre service, and without the constraints of the ageing copper network, upgrades will soon be available at up to 1Gbps.

FTTPoD requires a custom build of the fibre network infrastructure to the customer's premises upon request. As such, there are various steps to ensure that the service can be delivered and in an affordable way before an order is even placed. Cerberus Networks Director, Bob Hendy, explains "Because each FTTPoD order is a build-out of the broadband network to the customer, a full onsite survey is required to scope out the work needed to be carried out. Once the installation charges have been confirmed, we get an idea of how much is required and therefore how long the build will take."

Gigabit Voucher Funding

While not available at the time Trimstone Manor Hotel had ordered their service, FTTPoD is now an eligible service for the government's Gigabit Voucher Scheme where businesses are able to claim £2,500 each towards the installation costs. This has resulted in increased interest. Bob Hendy comments, "Although the installation charges can sometimes seem high, there may often be several kilometres of new fibre cabling required. With the Gigabit Voucher Scheme, neighbouring businesses can pool their vouchers to cover the installation costs, and other nearby premises will also be enabled for FTTP as a consequence of the build so this can be something that benefits whole communities."

Service Delivery

As one of very few UK Internet Service Providers with experience in delivering complex FTTP on Demand installations, Cerberus Networks was the natural choice of supplier for Trimstone Manor, as Philip explains, "When we initially enquired with Cerberus to see whether this product was able to meet our needs cost effectively, we promptly received a call from their sales team to confirm the service specifications and how the installation worked. Once we were happy that Cerberus could meet our needs, we placed our order with great anticipation in the knowledge that our exceedingly slow internet had its days numbered!"

Once the installation was underway, the provisioning team successfully managed the challenges of installing at difficult to reach rural locations, with Philip being kept up to date throughout. "Every Thursday we were contacted with an update as to how the work was progressing. We appreciated that the build was not going to be straightforward, with civil engineering work required on a busy 'A' road as well as fibre cabling being strung across a river. Cerberus were quick to respond to any queries we had."

Effective Support

Of course, getting FTTP installed is only a small part of the picture. The support team at Cerberus are available 24x7 and on hand to assist with any issues or queries relating to the broadband service. Although fibre broadband is inherently more reliable than copper-based services, for a hotel, it is essential to know that any issues will be looked at quickly. Philip is happy with the service he has received since the service was installed. "The service has been great since we've had it. We had a minor issue with the connection which wasn't Cerberus' fault and they were very quick and attentive in dealing with this. The issue was resolved quickly with no impact on our business".



The Verdict

Hotel owner, Philip has no hesitation in recommending FTTPoD to other businesses in a similar situation. "The service provides a very good upgrade for a significantly lower cost when compared to a leased line which was another avenue we explored but found that the cost would be prohibitive for such a small business."

Not only has the service provided a huge upgrade to the hotel's Internet connectivity but the business benefits of ultrafast connectivity have been immediately clear. "We no longer have bottlenecks on our Internet when we have 60 guests all trying to stream Netflix at once! This has massively improved guest satisfaction. We now have one of the fastest public Wi-Fi networks in Devon and it has opened up new marketing opportunities for us."

Cerberus Networks' Bob Hendy agrees, "We see a huge opportunity for rural businesses to expand because of ultrafast connectivity. Where they may have previously been constrained by poor broadband speeds, rural areas are now seeing a huge expansion in the digital economy whether through flexible working or simply being able to do things that were previously only possible in a city. The hospitality industry is a key part of this new economy, hosting conferences and events that can bring people together and further increase local business activity."