

# Kimpton Hotels Case Study

## Hotel Executives Get a Good Nights Sleep Knowing Guest Wireless Experience Rated 4-Stars

Today, hotel guests rank WiFi access higher than every other amenity, including complimentary breakfast and free parking. According to Forrester Research, 94% of guests see a hotel room without WiFi as a deal breaker. However, this level of expectation is coming with big disappointment: issues with wireless networks are topping guest complaints according to IT-decision makers. A Hotels.com poll found similar results when travelers from around the world were asked to rank 33 amenities in order of importance. The ability to stay connected was deemed the most important in-room amenity.

### The Bottom Line

Hotels are paying the price for inadequate WiFi with weak repeat business, lower bookings, waived fees and cancelled corporate events. Poor WiFi is now a \$5 billion headache for the world's hotels\*.

### Meeting Today's Expectations

One company that understands this need and has made strides in keeping guests connected? Kimpton Hotels. Kimpton has a collection of 61 boutique hotels in 27 cities nationwide. The company is focused on customizing guest experiences. As they say, "our 'standard' perks are decidedly non-standard." Kimpton management understands that today's travelers are ever-more demanding and tech-savvy, and they're expecting hotels to adapt.

In a USA TODAY piece, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants CEO Michael A. Depatie explained why the emphasis on connection is a must-have for customers. "You can get free Wi-Fi at your local Starbucks or burger joint, so I think you'd expect it at your hotel."

It's not just a solid room connection that guests are craving, it's a conveniently connected experience overall.

"Millennial customers in particular are going to want to book with their mobile or online. They're going to want to check in on the way from the airport to the hotel. While they're there, they may want to have an app to order room service or theater tickets. On the way down in the elevator, they're going to want to check out on their phone," Depatie said. "On the way to the front door, they're going to want to list a review on social media, maybe stop in the lobby and do a selfie, post it on Instagram. On the way to the airport, they're going to want the manager of the hotel to respond to their comment on TripAdvisor."



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## Technology That Improves Guest Experience & Business Operations

Kimpton decided to add Ecessa units to each property a little over seven years ago.

“Every Kimpton property receives an Ecessa device, so guests get Internet and load balancing/failover benefits,” said Shawn Slater, National Property Network Engineer, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants.

“What they get because of that? Great Internet service that never goes down.”

Using the Ecessa solution, in combination with a hospitality Internet access gateway appliance, Kimpton has accomplished several goals:

- Kimpton provides a robust Internet experience by combining multiple ISP connections for increased bandwidth and by load balancing guest traffic sessions for fast performance. This happens while maintaining the content filtering and control Kimpton requires.
- Scalability grows with customer demand. When Kimpton reaches a point where they need to add more bandwidth, they simply acquire additional ISP connections and quickly incorporate them into the solution.
- Today, Kimpton doesn't have to compromise between guest Internet experience and staff productivity. Static routing and prioritization allows segregation of traffic and guarantees adequate bandwidth.
- With the Ecessa units in place, Kimpton has reduced guest complaints due to network performance. And, they've avoided network outages and reduced IT costs by providing automated failover.
- With centralized monitoring through Cloud View, an online portal, the Kimpton staff always knows the state of the Internet access at all locations. They can address carrier issues as they begin to develop, well before they reach an emergency “Internet Down” condition.

“We're definitely seeing the value in what we purchased the Ecessa units for in the first place, with improvements to Guest Internet, operations VPN and automatic failover. Now, we've started using the Cloud View monitoring and management tool too.”

Sources:

Tnooz\*

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