



Sports & Leisure

Wireless in cable cars

WLAN hotspot as the basis for digital entertainment in the Hochkönig ski resort

Radiant sunshine, skis and poles in hand, and off to the gondola which brings visitors to the summit at 1,750 meters altitude. From inside the cable car you can quickly check your smartphone for reports on the weather, depth of snow and avalanche risk, or you can post a photo for your family and friends on Facebook. You have no plans for the evening yet, but that's no problem, because the events calendar on your mobile takes care of that, too. The gondola doors open, and all you have to think about now is your ski run.

More service for vacationists

This is something like the way that visitors can start their day at the Hochkönig ski resort in Austria. To provide tourists on the move with instant access to the Internet, the cable-car operator Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH offers a free WLAN hotspot in its "Kings Cab" gondolas with its own information and communication program. "This gives us direct contact to the visitors as soon as they enter the cable car, so that we can supply them with helpful information," says Michael Emberger, Managing Director of the Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH.

"They can make good use of their time before they go skiing." The network, hotspot and application were planned and implemented by the system vendor Loop21 Mobile Net GmbH. The infrastructure components come from the German network solution provider LANCOM Systems.

The basis is the WLAN hotspot

"Our job is to ensure that the WLAN hotspot operates over the entire length of the cable-car system, which in total is a distance of two kilometers," says Manuel Urbanek, Managing Director of Loop21 Mobile Net GmbH.

In order to meet this goal, the infrastructure required detailed planning in advance. It was vital because of the various regulations and requirements



that had to be met in order for the installation to be approved. "Only after the system was approved and all of



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Michael Emberger, Managing Director of the Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH

the various authorizations and permissions were obtained were we able to get on with installing the network,” says Urbanek. Mounting points were selected, radio surveys were carried



out, the WLAN was customized, cables were installed, and the network was connected up. The special outdoor-grade WLAN access points were mounted on selected pylons by an installation team from Loop21. This was followed by the successful acceptance by TÜV Süd and the start of the test

phase. “The tests were to fine-tune the WLAN,” said Emberger. “We had to guarantee uninterrupted connections no matter how fast the gondolas are moving.” To achieve this, the WLAN connectivity was tested with different terminal devices. After satisfactory results were achieved, the system was accepted.

An all-round entertainment package

The wireless network is the basis for the information and communication services offered by the Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH. The service itself was implemented by system vendor Loop21 using their own software Loop21 Mountainnet®. “The WLAN network was connected to the customer’s Internet access and then with the cloud service from Loop21,” says Urbanek. While traveling in the gondolas, tourists can use their mobile devices to access various types of content, including weather forecasts, a ski-slope panorama, avalanche reports, snow depth, events, Internet, and Facebook. “Users can get the latest detailed information, and they can com-

municate via the Internet or Facebook as well,” says Emberger. Customers are able manage the software themselves. Thus the information is constantly up-to-date and statistics can be analyzed directly.

The digital ski experience

“This project gives visitors quick and easy access to the content that they need and search for when they’re on the go,” reports Urbanek. This solution simultaneously increases the convenience for and the satisfaction of the guests by giving them current information within the blink of an eye. For example, information on changes in the weather can be forwarded to the visitors directly. “The overall installation perfectly augments our digital world because, after all, even wintersport enthusiasts do not want to go without their smartphones and tablets,” says Emberger. A professional WLAN ensures the high availability of the information and communication services. The entire network is centrally configured and managed by a WLAN controller. As the components all operate in the same way, the WLAN can be extended to other cableways at any time.

“All in all, we offer our visitors a constantly accessible service, which is more than just a simple hotspot: It also includes a complete entertainment program,” Emberger reports. Snow-loving visitors are sure to take away fond memories of the digital ski experience.

The customer: The cableway company Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH in the Hochkönig ski region of Austria has approximately 120 employees and operates a total of 33 cableways and ski lifts. The ski region Hochkönig is a part of Ski Amadé, the largest ski area in Austria with 760 km of slopes. It covers the most beautiful winter sports regions in the Salzburger Land and Styria. A single ski pass is valid for 29 locations.

The system vendor: The company Loop21 Mobile Net GmbH is based in Austria and is a manufacturer, developer and operator of software solutions for WLAN. Founded in 2008, the company has approx. 30 employees and has become established as an expert partner. In-depth knowledge of networking and infrastructures make Loop21 a competent developer of WLAN systems. Their hotspot software, developed in-house, also offers location-based services. It combines the mobility trend with entertainment, infotainment and navigation by WLAN.

At a glance

The customer:

Hochkönig Bergbahnen GmbH

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Schlöglberg 63

Austria

Phone.: +43 (0)6467 / 72 14

Email: office@hochkoenig-bergbahnen.at

Web: www.hochkoenig.at

Products and services:

Operator of a total of 33 cableways and ski lifts at the Hochkonig ski resort.

Requirements

- Quick and convenient WLAN for vacationists in the "Kings Cab" gondolas
- Interruption-free coverage over a distance of two kilometers
- WLAN as a reliable basis for the mobile application Loop21 Mountainment®

Systemhouse partner

Loop21 Mobile Net GmbH

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Loop21
www.loop21.net WLAN ENTERTAINER®



Components deployed:

- 10 x LANCOM OAP-321
- 16 x LANCOM OAP-320
- 2 x LANCOM IAP-321
- 1 x LANCOM WLAN Controller