

Mercator Case Study

Hotels: Premier Inn

Design ♦ Build ♦ Operate ♦ Support



When Premier Inn, the largest hotel chain in the UK, decided to expand to the Middle East, they chose Mercator as their strategic IT partner to help them meet aggressive launch deadlines in a brand new geographical market. Premier Inn is a well known 3* brand in the UK with over 570 hotels, targeting business and leisure markets with an affordable but high quality product – everything you would expect from a 4* hotel, at an budget price - however this is a relatively new concept in the UAE market..

“We realized that for this project to be successful, we needed to engage a reliable IT partner from the very beginning and as we were new to the region, this company had to be the right one. We knew Mercator had the experience and reputation for successfully implementing large scale IT projects, so the choice was obvious to us.”

“All our properties in the UK operate on the same model, but we had the opportunity in Dubai to offer a new product - meeting the requirements of the discerning customer base by providing them with the latest technology at an extremely attractive room rate. Premier Inn is a limited service or budget hotel, so whilst delivering high standards of customer service, we also operate on tight margins, so keeping cost to a minimum was very important to us. Mercator were able leverage their economy of scale to procure IT equipment for us at a very competitive prices.”

Stuart Reid, GM Premier Inn, Dubai Investments Park



The first Premier Inn outside of the UK opened their doors to guests on 6th April 2008 in Dubai Investments Park, on schedule and just thirteen months after building started on site. Mercator designed, implemented and now supports the IT infrastructure for this 308 room property, which showcases state of the art technology, much of which was a first for Premier Inn.

This includes a new property management system (PMS); free wireless LAN for corporate and guest use; voice over wireless LAN systems for corporate use; CAT 6 structured cabling system; IP telephony; IP CCTV; designing and setting up the windows domain and email system; data hosting in the Mercator Data Center; go live support on site, and 24/7 support via the Mercator Service Centre.

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Included in the design scope:

- Systems
 - Integrate, install and deploy the Opera Property Management System
 - Provide connectivity for Accounting System: establish a site-to-site VPN to Oracle Texas, for providing Oracle on Demand connectivity
 - Establish a VPN for Fidelio connectivity
 - License, install and set-up passport scanning system
- Servers
 - Design and implement consolidated file servers.
 - Provide data storage facilities on the SAN (Storage Area Network)
- Network
 - Establish a Local/Wide Area Network deployment strategy for the region-wide deployment of Premier Inn Hotels
 - Design, install and maintain network, routers, wired and wireless access.
 - Design and implement the LAN including both active (routing and switching) and passive (structured cabling) components, including UPS
 - Provide redundant WAN/Internet connectivity to the site
 - Design and implement a site-to-site VPN network solution for branch offices
 - Design and implement a remote access VPN network solution for home users
 - Provide connectivity to local Internet Service Provider
- Hosting
 - Host Opera Property Management System in the Data Centre
- Security
 - License, install and set-up Kaba door locking system
 - Set up firewalls and network intrusion prevention systems
- Telephony
 - Set-up of telephony infrastructure
 - Provide and install office phones
 - Provide and install in-room/guest telephones (pay as you go)
 - Provide Voice over Wireless LAN (VoWLAN) phone services
 - Provide fax services

Of course opening a hotel is not always plain sailing, and this was no exception, but Premier Inn were able to reap even more benefits of choosing the right IT infrastructure partner almost immediately.

“Shortly after we opened, a pipe in the ceiling above reception broke and water began to gush down right onto the reception desk, over the computers, terminals, passport scanners and printers – everything. Over 1,000 gallons of water pass through this pipe per minute - this could have been a potential disaster in the few minutes it took to turn off the water. Mercator were on site and set up a replica reception, using the hotel’s wireless connection. Within 60 minutes, there was a fully-functioning reception and the hotel could carry on with business as usual. They pulled the equipment out so quickly that it hardly got wet. Their speed and reaction to an emergency was amazing.”

Stuart Reid, GM Premier Inn, Dubai Investments Park

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Premier Inn plan to open a further three hotels in Dubai during 2009, with Mercator providing the IT support (Silicon Oasis, Sports City and Airport Road), and there are further plans to expand across the Gulf region starting with Abu Dhabi and Oman.

"Mercator have already successfully completed a number of large scale IT infrastructure projects in Dubai including Terminal 3 of Dubai Airport, the new Emirates Group Head Quarters, the Rugby Sevens Stadium and Harbour Hotel. We recognize that we have the skills to deliver and operate the IT infrastructure and connectivity that is necessary in any 21st century construction project and we have several exciting new projects in the pipeline."

Duncan Alexander, VP Sales and Marketing, Mercator

Mercator, a CMMI Level 3 certified organization, have a dedicated hotel and leisure business unit, and also provide and support the IT for Al Maha Desert Resort, Harbour Hotel in Dubai and the upcoming Wolgan Valley Resort in Australia.

Services available from Mercator include:

- Hotel IT System Auditing and IT Governance
- Sourcing of hardware, software and infrastructure
- IT Consultancy
- Project Management
- Procurement and Implementation Services
- Data Center Hosting
- Call Center Services
- On Site or Remote Support