

CASE STUDY

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The award-winning Rugby World Cup 2015 venue, Sandy Park Stadium & Conference Centre benefits from a converged infrastructure communications solution.

Sandy Park Stadium & Conference Centre is a purpose-built £15 million rugby venue, complete with full training facilities and commercial offices topped with two expansive floors of banqueting suites. It is home to Exeter Chiefs RFC and was one of the host venues for Rugby World Cup 2015.

Sandy Park required a **single IT and communications solution** to satisfy the operational needs of both its rugby and conferencing staff, as well as those of its visitors. Their vision was to enhance the visitor experience for their clients by providing a pleasant, safe and entertaining environment with flexible working and communications facilities.

Sandy Park needed a wide-ranging solution to meet its voice, data, internet, CCTV, disaster recovery, metered Wi-Fi access, audio visual entertainment and media accessibility needs. This meant integrating differing technologies and equipment from a variety of manufacturers underpinned by a **stable and well-managed cable infrastructure**.

However, Sandy Park was built on an isolated green-field site making provision of ample voice, data and internet connectivity at a reasonable price very problematic, especially with the stadium and conference centre being built in just an eight-month timeframe.

Sandy Park could not open for business without its communications solution being in place for both health and safety reasons and in order for the stadium to receive the endorsement of the public and media to make the opening a complete success.



Access to the unfinished site was not available until late August, so we had less than three weeks to complete and test the whole installation.

Detailed project plans were put in place by one of our **dedicated project managers** and these were quickly adapted as the requirements of physically delivering the structural building took precedence. Our flexibility and willingness to work closely with the building contractor meant the project was delivered on time and within budget.

swcomms provided Sandy Park with all their communications needs and associated infrastructure starting with a high density CAT5 cabling infrastructure with fibre backbones from the core to edge cabinets.

Outlets were supplied to deliver to PCs, CCTV, TVs, wireless access points, telephony and numerous other specialist end points. Engineers were specially allocated to the Stadium with detailed knowledge of the infrastructure to ensure efficient ongoing support.

A Cisco network local area network (LAN) was overlaid on the cabling for voice, data and internet use, as well as for transmitting CCTV images to the Stadium's control centre for match day events.

Point to point microwave links were deployed over a 1.8 km distance between Sandy Park, our data centre and a resilient back up premises to carry all of Sandy Park's voice, data and internet traffic.

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Sandy Park's entire telephony solution is hosted within our data centre linked to Sandy Park via the microwave link and provides them with all of the telephony features they required, as well as providing access to pooled ISDN digital lines enabling them to handle the high volumes of calls staff receive on match days.

Cordless telephony was implemented using digital enhanced cordless telephony (DECT) handsets which are used by the conference centre staff to allow them to **roam seamlessly** throughout the building and always be contactable.

An automated attendant was installed to provide callers with information regarding upcoming matches, including ticket sales and travel information on how to reach Sandy Park.

It also provides direct access to the conference centre managers and other key staff at Sandy Park therefore routing their customers to the most relevant person for their query.

Public access Wi-Fi gives conference delegates and visiting media access to the Internet providing a critical service to its clients and an **extra revenue stream**.

This solution makes full use of the latest communications infrastructure and technology. It is supported on an ongoing basis by **swcomms'** engineers both on and off site to ensure support, changes and expansion of the solution is managed in a professional manner.

Sandy Park wanted a complete communications solution from just one provider that would take total responsibility for all its deployment support and **future expansion**. **swcomms** met that requirement and in doing so delivered a cost-effective and efficient solution that has paid dividends in attracting thousands of customers to the conference facilities and ensuring Sandy Park is at the forefront of England's club rugby stadia.

Since then, Sandy Park has begun a £24 million redevelopment to increase its capacity from 10,744 to 20,600. The plans include three state-of-the-art grandstands, a 1,000-seater auditorium, and extra conference and banqueting facilities.

We continue to be at the heart of these redevelopment plans to ensure their communications infrastructure matches the ambitious needs of this ever-evolving business.

"One of our main concerns on choosing Sandy Park as our new site was its inaccessibility in terms of communications. swcomms quickly allayed any fears we had by providing a single solution that was not only efficient and cost-effective, but was able to cope with the stadium and conference centre's differing needs.

"In addition, we could not give them very much time to work in but swcomms delivered the job on time in a flexible and professional manner that we still benefit from today with regular contact from our account manager."
Kieron Northcott, deputy chief executive

