

# Food service pioneer caters for future demand with wireless warehouse upgrade

Qolcom drives performance with the Aruba 560 Series



## The Reynolds Story

In 1945, when William Reynolds first set up his fruit and veg stall in Hackney little did he know that it was the birth of a £200 million enterprise. New generations of the family have built on William's legacy, transforming the company into a leading supplier of fresh produce. The only family-run greengrocer to work on a national scale, Reynolds Catering Supplies now employs over 1,200 staff and distributes more than 3,000 types of fresh and chilled foods from around the globe to businesses across the UK.

Operations are managed from a state-of-the-art National Distribution Centre (NDC) in Hertfordshire. Opened in 2005 and valued at £44m, this temperature-controlled facility extends over 140,000 square feet and handles the full spectrum of fresh, cooked and ready-made offerings from Reynolds.

## Warehouse of the Future

For a company to survive and thrive over eight decades, as Reynolds has, it needs to keep finding new ways to

do things better. IT plays a major role. Innovators by nature, Reynolds have embraced technology, expediting the flow of goods through the National Distribution Centre by digitising processes and systems. When the family adopted wireless technology, it lifted efficiency at the flagship warehouse to new heights. But excellence is not a fixed point. When the original wireless network started to tire, the IT department decided to act fast and upgrade to the best in modern technology.



## Enter Qolcom

The Reynolds wireless upgrade started, as many upgrades do, with a demo of Aruba Central. Impressed by the trial experience, Janko Obucina, the Senior IT Systems Engineer, chose Aruba Platinum Partner Qolcom to oversee the transformation. The process began with a comprehensive site survey. Warehouses are challenging spaces where storage racks can reach 10-15 metres in height and goods can interfere with signal so the audit required unique skills and specialist equipment.



*“The survey was very thorough. We had top Qolcom engineers check every detail; they identified Wi-Fi signal and spectrum data, inspected access point mounting and cabling accessibility and ran elaborate simulations to forecast how the system would perform.”*

Janko Obucina, Senior IT Systems Engineer

### A Proven Methodology

Qolcom has a track record of fostering wireless innovation in the logistics industry. All this experience was brought to bear on the Reynolds project. Drawing on insights from the site survey, Nick Dockrill and his team drew up a technical design that future-proofs the Reynolds headquarters and guarantees reliable customer service for years to come.

*“The week and a half that we invested in planning was key to this project. We made sure the Wi-Fi goes exactly where it needs to, from the loading areas, through the aisles and racks, right up to the roof. Janko and his team have a granular view of what each forklift driver is experiencing, we’ve eliminated holes in coverage and the new access points are so much more resilient.”*

Nick Dockrill, Account Director, Qolcom

### Access All Areas

A distribution centre is no ordinary wireless environment. Only the toughest access points survive the daily wear and tear and extremes of temperature that come with the territory. The Aruba 560 series was precisely what Reynolds needed. Designed for outdoor use, these rugged APs are built for endurance. Moisture and dust, salt spray and frost, high winds and hard knocks – the 560 series withstands them all. Electrical interfaces include industrial-strength surge protection and the units are sealed against airborne contaminants. Combining AP565/AP567 models produces a robust, responsive and secure system that rejuvenates the NDC and reaffirms its status as a centre of excellence.

## Aruba 560 Series



- 1. Entry-level dual-band Wi-Fi 6**  
11ax radio support dual-band 2x2
- 2. Integrated IoT radio**  
IoT radio supports 802.15.4/Zigbee and BLE

- 3. Easy install**  
Shares common mounting rail for simplified outdoor access point installation

- 4. 1G PoE Ethernet ports with intelligent power monitoring**  
1Gbps Ethernet with included IP66/67 gland



### Solutions of Every Stripe

There was a further reason why upgrading to new Aruba APs made good business sense. Staff at the NDC use handheld computers and scanners by Zebra Technologies. Long-term partners, Aruba and Zebra have developed technical integrations and troubleshooting innovations that transform device performance. The Aruba UXI agent for Zebra is particularly helpful in reducing helpdesk tickets, cutting downtime and identifying the root causes of network issues. The Aruba UXI agent uses 802.11mc to pinpoint the precise location of any device issue and highlights it on the warehouse floor plan. Even when Zebra devices are in standby mode the UXI agent keeps checking network and application performance with low impact synthetic testing. Thanks to the intuitive UXI dashboard,



the Reynolds IT team can see in one glance how each device in the NDC is working.

### Two and Two is Five

Installing the new APs was a team effort. Working in step with the Qolcom project plan, Reynolds electricians handled the cabling, while Qolcom fitted the mounting brackets and configured the units in Aruba Central. Synergies between the team members meant the install completed ahead of schedule.

***“It was a true ‘out of the box’ upgrade. Usually, you expect some noise from users but in this case everyone was quiet. It’s the mark of a successful deployment when it happens without comment.”***

**Janko Obucina, Senior IT Systems Engineer**

### Change is Good

By increasing the resilience of individual APs, unshackling the warehouse from the old on-premise controller and moving functions to the cloud, Reynolds’ new wireless network frees up IT resources like never before. The powerful Aruba Central management platform underpins everything. A cloud-based networking solution with AI-powered insights, Aruba Central automates troubleshooting, workflows and security to keep business running at peak levels. Janko and his team are constantly on the move between the NDC and the nine other Reynolds depots - now they can manage the NDC network on the go, through a

single pane of glass. Having trialled Aruba Central at the outset of the project, Janko was impressed by how it had already evolved within a few months. With a little training from Qolcom engineers, his team quickly mastered the intuitive dashboard and hit the ground running.

***“It has been a different kind of support to what you are used to. Usually, you are getting in touch with the vendor about how to fix things; in this case, we talk about what we can do next, how we can make the system do even more.”***

**Janko Obucina, Senior IT Systems Engineer**

Early feedback is resoundingly positive. The team likes the ‘smooth UX’, ‘self-healing system’, ‘ease of management versus the on-premise controller’ and ‘virtual control for continuity’. It’s ‘easy to apply and change settings’ and ‘the guest portal is much better’ – important when many of Reynolds’ most important client meetings take place at the NDC.

***“The service from Qolcom is as good as you can get. They’re with you, every step of the way, from start to end. It’s great working with a partner that is so responsive and whose attitude is that everything is doable. You feel confident that your system is in the hands of a company with serious experience.”***

**Janko Obucina, Senior IT Systems Engineer**



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To discuss how Qolcom’s Managed Network Services can benefit your organisation, your users and your IT team, contact Qolcom on **01635 298021** or at [sales@qolcom.co.uk](mailto:sales@qolcom.co.uk)