

Case Study

PCCW Global use HiveRadar to streamline AP-on-a-stick surveys



PCCW Global®

PCCW Global is one of the world's leading communication service providers and a UK leader in supplying fast and reliable internet services to large multi-tenanted properties. Their range of managed internet solutions includes fibre and wireless broadband for homes and businesses, and their full fibre residential and business internet access can provide speeds of 1 Gigabit and beyond.

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Philip Ince, Wireless Network Engineer

Introduction

A pre-deployment survey, otherwise called an Access Point (AP)-on-a-stick survey, is an important part of the wireless design process. However, the logistics of performing them had always proven a bit of a problem for the PCCW Global wireless team.

Wireless Network Engineer, Philip Ince, explained what their challenges were.

"I was using a home-brew solution which consisted of a speaker stand. I didn't have a battery pack, so I had to take an extension lead with me, find a plug socket, and then trail a cable along the floor to get power to the AP. Needless to say, it was messy, didn't look professional, and didn't give the right impression to our clients."

Alan Dunn, Network and Operations Manager, expanded on how their setup was not very time efficient.

"There was a lot of work involved to set up for an AP-on-a-stick survey. We had to get the kit in place, mount the AP, get the cabling done, and get the power to the AP. You then have to

repeat most of these steps each time you move the kit, so we really wanted to optimise our time with a better, all-in-one solution."

Solution

Alan had been considering buying a flight case and all the required component pieces to make his own all-in-one site survey kit. However, during his research he discovered the HiveRadar Wireless Site Survey Kit (WSSK).

"The HiveRadar kit did everything we needed it to do, plus it was much less hassle than buying all the individual parts and building something myself.

The fact it can be taken as airline carry-on luggage was a real bonus because that was also a consideration for us," said Alan.

Outcome

Shortly after purchasing the HiveRadar, PCCW Global needed to do a pre-deployment survey at a marina in Leicestershire. This provided the perfect opportunity to use the HiveRadar. What's more the case is buoyant, watertight and impact resistant, ideal for outdoor surveys like this.

Phil recalls his experience of using the kit;

"It was great. With the HiveRadar I can be setup in a matter of minutes as opposed to the 30 to 40 minutes it used to take. I don't need to use cable ties to attach APs anymore either thanks to the universal rail mount.

I also save time moving around the site, because I can collapse the pole down with the AP still attached, wheel the kit to the next survey point, extend the pole back up, and I'm ready to go again.

It's saved me heaps of time and hassle overall."

The WSSK also comes equipped with a myriad of extra equipment to make surveying easier, including a laser distance measure, LED flashlight, and a multi-tool.

"I've used the laser measure several times because you don't always get accurate plans from the client. Therefore, I occasionally need to take measurements to make sure the scale on the drawings is correct, because if you put bad information into Ekahau, you get bad results out." said Phil.

With up to 21 hours battery life on DC, or 9 hours on PoE+, the HiveRadar kit has more than enough juice to complete even the largest of projects.



Figure 1: HiveRadar WSSK in use at the Marina