

XSCAPE: ENHANCING THE LEISURE EXPERIENCE

Xscape provides some of the UK's most exciting leisure venues, where visitors can spend the entire day enjoying themselves. This makes the provision of adequate mobile phone coverage essential. With the help of Arqiva, Xscape has been able to make two of its centres a hotspot for mobile phone users.

For site owners who want to attract members of the public to use their facilities, cutting edge services are a must. This is especially true for leisure complexes whose young target audiences demand the best and latest services at all times.

Xscape offers a range of leisure activities including cinemas, indoor ski slopes and bowling alleys as well as shopping and dining areas. The complexes are designed to provide a complete entertainment experience. Needless to say, visitors to Xscape expect to be able to use their mobile telephones during their visit.

The first Xscape entertainment destination was built in Milton Keynes in 2003. Achieving mobile phone coverage was a priority from the outset. As Andrew Russell, an Asset Manager at Xscape explains: *"With an expected average dwell time of up to seven hours, there was no question that visitors to the complex would want to use their mobile phones, whether to locate friends on arrival or call someone to pick them up when they're finished. Not to mention teenagers who would want to send text and picture messages to their friends. Because of these factors, adequate coverage was vital for us."*

Capacity was also a key issue. The complex includes a number of relaxation areas such as cafes, bars and restaurants where visitors were likely to remain stationary and therefore more likely to use more sophisticated 3G services such as online games, email and music downloads.

Additionally, it wanted to ensure that whichever solution it implemented could be easily upgraded to meet any future advances. With the need to solve these issues in mind, Xscape called upon Arqiva to provide a solution.



End-to-end entertainment

With the building process still underway, Xscape asked Arqiva to implement an InBuilding system that would provide excellent 2G coverage throughout the 500,000 square feet site. Because of the size of the complex, Arqiva provided an active DAS network (Distributed Antenna System) that would enable visitors to the site to benefit from strong, amplified signals, consistent coverage and maximum capacity.

Additionally, because Arqiva fully understands the changing, innovative nature of mobile telephone technology, its system is designed for full scalability and easy upgrade with the system now having been upgraded to carry 3G traffic, giving Xscape confidence in its ability to cater for the needs of the future.

The implementation process was a success and, by the time the complex opened in October 2003, visitors were able to benefit from the best possible mobile network coverage across a number of operators.

Andrew Russell adds: *“One of the benefits of the Arqiva proposition is that it is fully managed which means there is no inconvenience or added responsibility for us. And with so many different things going on within our complexes, that’s really important.”*

Following the success at Milton Keynes, Xscape decided to use InBuilding for both 2G and 3G traffic at its Castleford complex near Leeds. Andrew Russell explains: *“The InBuilding system is now an integral part of our service to visitors, just as mobile phones are an integral part of most people’s lives,”* he says. *“Being able to use their phones in the complex enhances the entire entertainment experience.”*



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