

West Ham United

The Hammers stay in touch thanks to Spitfire

The Challenge

Premier League football club West Ham United needed to upgrade its media communications facilities at The Boleyn Ground in anticipation of future European UEFA Cup football. It also needed to improve communications at its training ground and to link up its retail stores.

The Solution

Leading voice and data solution provider Spitfire implemented an upgraded media communication solution at The Boleyn Ground. This involved installing phone links in the media suite and Press Box so that journalists can send copy directly from their laptops back to their publications. Digital ISDN2e communication links and ISDN2e lines were also installed, allowing live commentary to be broadcast from the ground and enabling match photographers to transmit digital images. To ensure efficient operation of all communications on match days Spitfire also provide an on-site engineer for all home games.

Spitfire also recommended and then implemented a virtual private network (VPN) for the Club. This creates 'logical tunnels' across the Internet through which encrypted voice and data traffic can be sent, making the entire network 'virtually' private. The VPN has enabled West Ham United to link its retail stores to the central IT network so that they can sell match tickets. And by using a remote booking system, fans can see which seats are available at the stadium and so book the exact seats they would like for forthcoming matches.

The latest Nortel Business Communications Manager (BCM) phone system was also installed at West Ham's training ground, providing more than 20 extensions, as well as full voicemail facilities for staff.

The Benefits

The communications upgrade at The Boleyn Ground has allowed the Club to cope with increased media coverage and also with the needs of the foreign media, whilst the Nortel BCM system at West Ham's training ground provides an expandable communications platform that will meet changing needs in the future.



Peter Longley, West Ham's IT Manager commented, *"Like any well-run business, we need reliable and efficient communications. In addition, because of the media attention which the club attracts we also have to provide top-class facilities for the sports journalists who report on our games. The advice, equipment and support that Spitfire provides for us ensures we have the very latest communication facilities, in order to meet these demands."*

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