

Vienna, 25 April 2016

WLAN performance at the Austria Center Vienna unmatched anywhere in the world, earns venue 2016 Digital Infrastructure Award

High availability in the main building and exhibition halls for 20,000 simultaneous users: the Austria Center Vienna's innovative WLAN won over a panel of international experts, seeing off competition from high-profile congress destinations worldwide. The trophy was presented at IMEX.

Austria's largest congress and event centre, managed by Susanne Baumann-Söllner, has invested heavily in seamless, high-availability wireless local area network (WLAN) infrastructure to facilitate optimal networking among participants and support paperless congresses, live HD streaming and hybrid meeting formats.

Award confirms effectiveness of new strategy

"This international award clearly shows that the digital strategy that I developed with my team at the Austria Center Vienna – and which our IT partner H82 has implemented so smoothly – is hitting the right spot," said Susanne Baumann-Söllner, Managing Director of the Austria Center Vienna. "It allows us to support and promote new congress formats and enables us to do our bit to breathe new life into the meetings industry," she added.

A seamless, high-availability WLAN for 20,000 users or 35,000 simultaneous connections from multiple devices gives event organisers access to a truly unique IT infrastructure package. The system's appeal also stems from its fast download speeds. "It delivers unlimited internet access irrespective of the type, age and origin of the device being used. Our system allows users to simply log in, start networking or work as if they were in their own home or office," she explained.

This is made possible thanks to a high concentration of HD access points (93 in total) and excellent bandwidth. Bandwidth is set at 1 GB/s as standard, with the option to increase speed to 4 GB/s at any time. From the summer onwards, organisers will have access to speeds of up to 20 GB/s. 100 Mbit/s are available to all organisers absolutely free of charge under standard agreements – which is a unique selling point in its own right.

The IT infrastructure is complemented by 1,500 permanently cabled LAN connections dotted throughout the building. These are particularly in demand for offices at large-scale congresses and in smaller meeting rooms.

Strong IT partner - international demand for H82's expertise

The WLAN infrastructure is provided and operated by the Austria Center Vienna and trusted partner enterprise H82. "The fact that we are able to implement our IT strategy so effectively is also down to the fact that we have H82 by our side, who have been working in step with us for years now. This award comes as a welcome endorsement of our joint efforts," Ms Baumann-Söllner noted.

For H82 CEO Johann Weck, the secret to the award-winning WLAN's success is down to three elements: the right hardware to begin with, availability of the necessary expertise to get the best out of it and, finally, the opportunity to offer an exceptional level of service to customers. "When we selected the new hardware around three years ago, the manufacturer of the technology was present at the first congress just to be on the safe side. Even they were amazed when they saw how quickly we were able to fix any issues that came up. And it's exactly this level of service that our customers value," Mr Weck revealed. "We are on site, constantly taking the system to the next level and delivering exactly what people want: high performance internet where it is needed."

Austria Center Vienna submission way ahead of the competition

The other finalists included the Marina Bay Sands convention centre and hotel in Singapore, the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre in Australia and Ireland's Croke Park Meetings & Events. "The Austria Center Vienna was the strongest candidate by a considerable margin," confirmed Roslyn McLeod, jury chair and co-chair of INCON as she praised Austria's largest congress and event centre. McLeod hopes that this example of best practice will provide positive inspiration for the entire congress and meetings industry. Each year the INCON Digital Infrastructure Award is given in recognition of exceptionally innovative digital infrastructure at leading congress centres and convention hotels.

About IAKW-AG

Internationales Amtssitz- und Konferenzzentrum Wien, Aktiengesellschaft (IAKW-AG) is responsible for maintaining the Vienna International Centre (VIC) and operating the Austria Center Vienna. The Austria Center Vienna is Austria's largest conference centre, with 24 halls, 180 offices and meeting rooms, and some 42,000 square metres of event space (including 22,000 square metres of exhibition space), and is one of the top players on the international conference circuit. In 2016 alone the venue will welcome around 77,000 delegates at 10 large-scale international congresses. IAKW-AG and the Austria Center Vienna are headed by Chief Executive Officer Susanne Baumann-Söllner. Visit www.acv.at for additional information.

About H82

H82 is an international full-service provider of technical equipment and support services for congresses. The company draws on its extensive IT experience, state-of-the-art IT equipment, its own rental inventory and is part of a strong network. Its clients have access to custom IT solutions that match their precise specifications and can draw on expert technical support at every stage of the event – from initial planning to execution. The expert team of consultants and technicians working under CEO Johann Weck guarantees first-class results.

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