



# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



**Leo BRAND**  
CEO  
Swisscom Hospitality Services

Leo Brand is the CEO of Swisscom Hospitality Services. He started at Swisscom since the takeover of Megabeam in 2002. He has held various positions at Swisscom Eurospot, first as Managing Director for the Benelux countries, then as Head of the European Business Units. He has been the Head of Sales responsible for the EMEA area (Europe, Middle East, Africa) since the beginning of 2007. He was formerly an adviser to Adventium Business Partner/Adcore Strategy and to A. T. Kearney Management Consultants.

Source: Swisscom



## The Swiss Army Knife of Hotel Entertainment

### Swisscom diversifies to become a turnkey player in the hospitality industry

With convergence in hotels on the horizon, some telecom companies are starting to establish themselves in the hospitality market as "all-in-one" IP providers. Swisscom, while not new to the industry, is expanding greatly. We asked CEO Hospitality Services Leo Brand to explain Swisscom's new offerings in the hospitality market...

Do hoteliers understand the interest of IPTV?

I think it is our task to be consultants and advise them on the long-term benefits of information technology so that they see their IT expenditures as investments that actually create value for their businesses. Our IPTV solution is a case in point: It helps hoteliers turning what has become a cost centre into a revenue generator while bringing the guest experience to the next level.

Today, many hoteliers agree on the potential benefits of IP convergence. However, they have questions: "When should I invest in new technology and hardware? What is the cost? What business model will work best for me? Who will run my converged IP network?" They need a trusted technology partner who answers these and similar questions, guides them on the right path and offers them reasonable financing options.

On rolling out HD content over an IP network. Why do you think you can do it better than the traditional VOD players?

The way they have been structuring their offerings is over COAX. You can do IP converged with COAX, but there are limitations on bandwidth. The possibilities become less and if you have a COAX "daisy chain" set up, this limits

the bandwidth in such a way that you would not be able to run HD TV or accommodate different IP applications. So that is the first situation. Other hotels have CAT5 structures where they have not integrated services to the

full extent of their IP technologies. So they added Internet over the same network but it's unknown whether they would be able to manage services and IP devices on a converged network. We decided to invest in a managed network platform to be able to manage hundreds and thousands of IP devices over different networks.

One of the interesting facts is the EU regulations on data retention. Can you tell us about it?

Data compliance does not only concern data retention but also data security and the guest's privacy that we have to keep in mind. We have done extensive research in this area and are aware of the various legal requirements imposed by the national authorities. I cannot go into details, but we have a complete overview on what it means to be data compliant. We are actively working with our clients to understand and align with these directives. This is becoming yet another key differentiator for us as we understand that many service providers do not fully meet relevant EU regulations in the individual countries.

*"We have invested in a network platform that will run hundreds of applications and devices on one IP network"*