

## The Mansion on Turtle Creek

### Envisioning the Future of Hospitality: Improving Five-Star Service With Vocera

#### Summary

The Mansion on Turtle Creek, A Rosewood Hotel, is located in one of Dallas' most fashionable residential districts. It has long been recognized as one of the finest hotels in the world, as signified by its five-star and five-diamond rankings. The Mansion boasts a two-to-one staff to guest ratio and is well-known for excellent guest service.

Management is constantly on the lookout for ways to improve and expedite guest service, streamline staff workload, and continually raise the benchmark in customer service among the other five-star hotels worldwide. Toward these objectives, The Mansion on Turtle Creek was one of the first hotels to install a robust wireless network, selecting Wayport as its Internet service provider in 2000. In 2006, to further optimize the network and increase operational efficiencies, The Mansion worked with Wayport to install the Vocera® Communications System. The hotel deployed the wireless, wearable Vocera Communication Badge to allow hotel staff to communicate more effectively and better meet the needs of guests.

#### Challenges

Prior to installing Vocera, hotel employees—including bellmen, engineering staff, and housekeeping staff—relied on pagers, two-way radios, and in-house telephones. Using all these devices to communicate with a staff of 300 people created a number of challenges. For instance, switchboard operator Christie Moore would call the pager of a housekeeping staff member to pass along a task requested by their respective director. However, Moore and other staff at The Mansion found that tracking people down using a paging system was an exercise in patience.

“It was a challenge,” said Moore. “If you would page a person, sometimes they wouldn't hear it because they would be vacuuming. Then, you would try to page someone else to go get them, and if no one is answering their pages, you have a big problem.”

Beyond the headache the pagers created for staff, their most significant disadvantage was the service delays for guests and patrons. It could take up to 10 minutes for a page to be answered by the appropriate hotel staff member.

“If we were busy doing multiple tasks and got a page, we'd have to stop what we're doing, run to the phone, try to call the operator, and they might put us on hold,” said Donald Jones, a three-year veteran of The Mansion's housekeeping department. Bellstaff experienced similar frustration when contacted by pagers.

“I didn't know why [the pager] was going off—what the particular situation was or what the urgency was. I just knew that someone was paging me,” commented Thomas Fowler, a bellman at The Mansion for more than 20 years. Because Fowler and his fellow bellmen are frequently on the move, they had to go to the “back of the house” or locate an empty guestroom's phone just to answer a page.

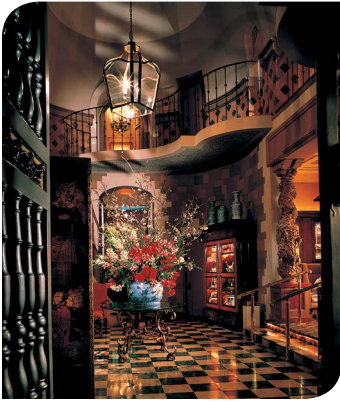


*The Mansion on Turtle Creek*  
A ROSEWOOD HOTEL  
DALLAS

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**Carl Arnold**  
Systems Manager  
The Mansion





## Solution

Management at The Mansion on Turtle Creek envisioned taking the customer service and pageantry synonymous with The Mansion to the next level. Philippe Leboeuf, who oversees The Mansion and serves as vice president of operations for Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, fully supported this vision and felt that it was important to be on the cutting-edge, as long as the investment made to stay on the cutting-edge benefited the guest experience. As part of fulfilling this vision, The Mansion's leadership team charged systems manager Carl Arnold with researching technologies that would accelerate guest service and help employees work more efficiently. Arnold considered cell phones and other comparable devices, but none of the systems provided immediate connectivity. While working with Wayport to upgrade Internet and wireless connectivity at The Mansion, Arnold was introduced to the Vocera Communications System.

"Not only do we provide the wireless access for guests at hotels, we also have the capability to maximize the scalability and security of our network to provide other services that can run over the wireless network," said Michele Fanning, director of marketing, Wayport. "When you're installing a system like Vocera, you need to have a robust network that can support it and other complex applications. We are always looking for ways to bring additional value to our hotel customers and through our partnership with Vocera, we are able to offer another product that increases operational efficiencies and gives the property new capabilities, all over one seamless network. Wayport provides a strong, carrier-grade network that we manage and monitor, which gives the hotels and their customers a better overall experience."

"The Vocera System was a good, easy tie-in to our telephone system. We saw how staff could use it, so it was a really nice fit; a much better fit than what we could have done with cellular technology," said Arnold. Although Vocera calls are primarily processed through the operator, Leboeuf and the staff noticed a significant improvement in guest response times and staff satisfaction when the System was installed.

## Results

Since The Mansion's Vocera installation launched in June 2006, hotel staff have reported a much improved workflow, ensuring guest needs are met as soon as (and sometimes before) the need arises. For example, bellman Thomas Fowler found Vocera helpful when seeing a guest to their room and getting them settled in. "They may want a bucket of ice, some drinks, or some pressing picked up from their room. I can get all those things done without even having to pick up the phone or leave the guest. This has been a great shift toward getting my job done faster, and all hands-free."

"As soon as I take the Vocera call, I know exactly what's going on. It may be that I'm not needed in the lobby, but I should go to a different floor to help someone else. I don't have to waste time finding a phone in the hallway or even go down to the lobby. It cuts out all those in-between steps," added Fowler.

Ensuring that guests have an enjoyable stay even while they are outside of the hotel also is a priority for The Mansion. Now, bellmen can assist the concierge in handling reservations for guests. "As a bellman is settling a guest into their room, it's intrusive to pick up the room phone if you're the staff member because it's the guest's amenity. In the past, [the bellman] would say 'Let me go back down to my desk, and I'll call the restaurant for you.' Now, as they are hanging items in the closet, they can simultaneously make dinner reservations," noted Leboeuf.

Housekeeping duties also have become more streamlined, according to Linda Hall, director of housekeeping. Hall is particularly fond of Vocera's "locate" function, which lets a user find another nearby Vocera Badge user. "The fact that you can find out who the closest person to a particular area helps speed up service."

Jones, Hall, and the entire housekeeping staff compliment the functionality of the Vocera System and appreciate how quickly it allows them to attend to guest needs. "Communication is easier than it used to be; from what I've experienced here versus the time before Vocera—almost 100 percent easier," asserted Jones.

In addition to helping employees provide world-class guest service, the Vocera System also enhances the tranquil environment of The Mansion by cutting down on walkie-talkie radios announcing guests' needs. Engineering administrative assistant Angie Barron, who handles all dispatch calls for engineering and housekeeping, touted how quiet the halls of The Mansion have been since Vocera went live. "If I have someone calling on the radio regarding the facilities, it's something we don't want everyone to have to hear. I think that privacy helps—that's one thing I really like about Vocera."

Thanks to the Vocera System, the Wayport Wi-Fi network, and the dedication of each employee at The Mansion on Turtle Creek, responding to guest requests now only takes a matter of seconds. And, staff members are only a button's touch away from instant access to the people and resources they need to make each guest's stay memorable for all the right reasons. "There's something to be said about perception. Classic hotels like The Mansion are not perceived as hip and trendy hotels. Vocera and Wayport give us an edge where people understand that we do take technology seriously," said Leboeuf, "because the communication is so elegantly done."



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**Donald Jones**

The Mansion's Housekeeping Department



#### **For More Information**

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