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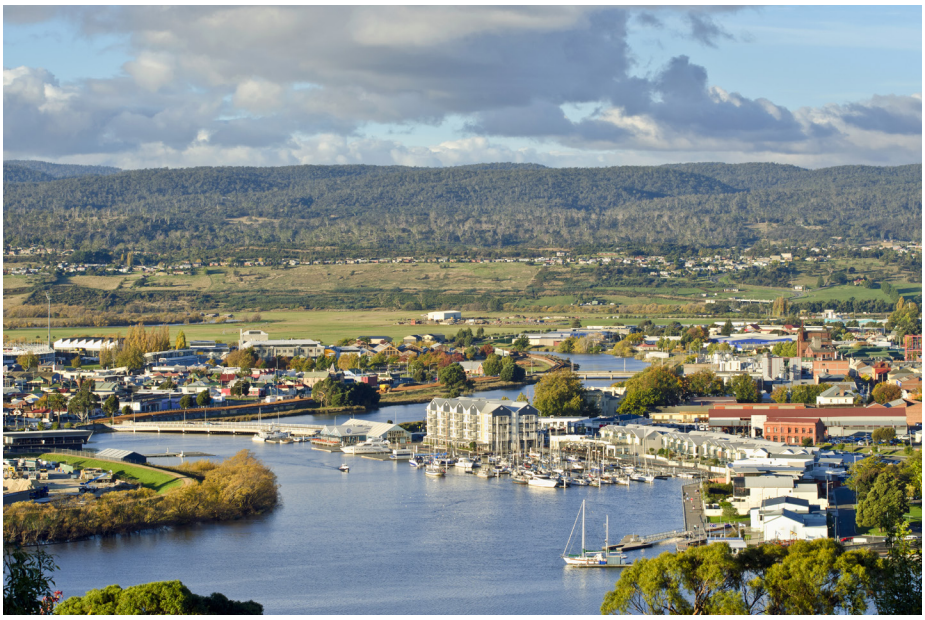
# Easyweb Digital and CommScope Fuel Smart City Public Wi-Fi and Community Engagement with RUCKUS® Solutions

**CUSTOMER**

Easyweb Digital

**COUNTRY**

Australia



## Overview

As the world becomes more digitally reliant, cities around the nation are evolving the way they operate, leveraging a wealth of innovative technologies to become smart cities. To enhance the lifestyle of everyone living and working in these cities, smart technology not only improves efficiency, but also helps boost economic growth. City councils are eager to make their cities as tech-forward as possible, hoping to realize more growth from bustling business hubs and increased tourism.

An intelligent public Wi-Fi network sits at the core of the smart city concept, the enabler of digital livelihoods in modern societies. Increasingly, citizens expect reliable, ubiquitous wireless internet access in community spaces and leisure settings. Public Wi-Fi enables residents and visitors to engage with their local councils, as well as provide unlimited access to the entire internet.

To successfully meet these expectations for public Wi-Fi, Easyweb Digital—a trusted provider of wireless network design, deployment and management solutions—partnered with CommScope to utilise their RUCKUS portfolio of wireless solutions for several Australian Smart City projects.

In 2019 alone, RUCKUS access points were deployed by Easyweb Digital for the City of Logan in Queensland, the City of Launceston in Tasmania and the City of Palmerston in the Northern Territory. Easyweb Digital was selected by each community's council as the partner of choice to deliver a fully managed public Wi-Fi service for a number of public spaces. Some of the council projects were funded by smart city grants won from the federal government.

"Easyweb Digital is thrilled to partner with the future-forward councils as their chosen managed service provider. There's major potential to further develop these Smart Cities and take their public Wi-Fi service offering one step further," says Daniel Sacchero, General Manager at Easyweb Digital.

## Requirements

- Widespread, scalable and reliable network coverage for outdoor areas
- Secure, reliable infrastructure for internet of things (IoT) sensors, public security systems (CCTV) and other connected devices such as sound systems and digital signage

- Protection of access points from exposure to all seasonal weather conditions
- Increase community engagement through freely accessible public Wi-Fi

## Solutions

- Installation of RUCKUS T Series outdoor access points, including T310, E510, T610 and T710, providing a cost-effective solution for wide coverage in outdoor areas
- RUCKUS ICX switches to deliver higher throughput and increased power to drive the latest Wi-Fi technologies
- An Easyweb Digital multi-tenanted and cloud-hosted RUCKUS SmartZone Controller for remote management of access points and switches
- Easyweb Digital's managed public Wi-Fi service powered by Encapto, their own cloud-hosted Wi-Fi management platform which delivers holistic management of public user engagement, including community advertising campaigns and comprehensive usage analytics; Encapto also complies with all relevant Australian regulations

## Challenges

When approaching a smart city project, Wi-Fi performance expectations are a paramount consideration. Spaces such as outdoor leisure centres, parklands and playgrounds are constantly being developed for the wider community, tourists and business professionals. Effective public Wi-Fi must grow and scale along with them, maintaining their high performance and reliable connectivity in the process. Consequently, the network infrastructure must be robust enough to withstand seasonal changes and weather extremes that range from frosty to tropical.

An important element of the smart city concept is bridging the "digital divide" by providing free, accessible Wi-Fi services to connect users in disadvantaged communities.

Councils and their communities thrive on better engagement, and within a smart city, free public Wi-Fi is an optimal channel to foster and grow such engagement, particularly with demographics which have typically been less-inclined to become involved with their local councils.

## Deployment

Easyweb Digital has been using the RUCKUS portfolio for more than 10 years to facilitate corporate and public Wi-Fi deployments across Australia.

"Given our long-standing and committed partnership with RUCKUS, we were confident in the expertise and solutions CommScope could provide," says Easyweb Digital's Sacchero. "From the perspective of a managed service provider, we sought a vendor with versatile, high-performing hardware and solutions to serve a number of different purposes," continued Sacchero. Easyweb Digital chose CommScope's RUCKUS wireless infrastructure solutions as the most appropriate to provide a high performing Wi-Fi system with scalable, reliable solutions to grow with smart city deployments. RUCKUS was the first choice when it came to a top quality vendor that was up to the challenge.

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## RELIABLE, SCALABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE CONNECTIVITY FOR SMART CITIES

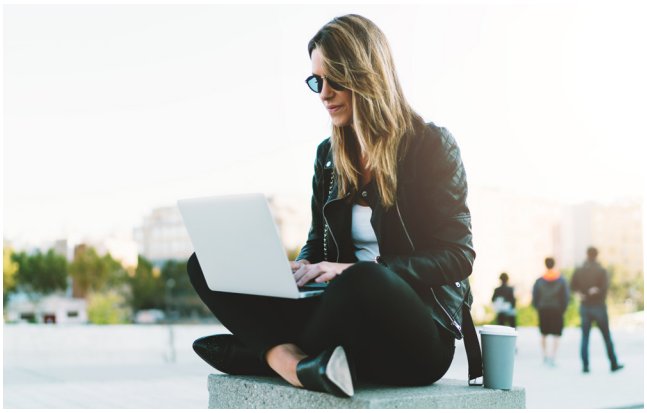
To address Easyweb Digital's most pressing need of ensuring reliable Wi-Fi access for seamless smart city living and tourism, RUCKUS hardware was installed and enabled widespread coverage in ever-evolving, high-density outdoor areas, such as public parks and playgrounds, with a 100-metre radius of reach—along with fast, reliable and scalable connectivity.

Free public Wi-Fi is an essential part of tourism in smart cities. A reliable network can provide travellers with the connectivity needed to seamlessly explore the city. In order to avoid compromise between cost-effectiveness and performance, a number of RUCKUS access points were deployed to each smart city location.

"Large cellular data plans are usually an expensive option, especially for international visitors, so tourists often rely on Wi-Fi to help them navigate the city and browse local activities or transport options," says Easyweb Digital's Sacchero. "It is important for Smart City solutions to be high-performing and dependable, especially for Wi-Fi infrastructures that require around the clock connectivity."

## WITHSTANDING UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER

The durability of RUCKUS access points keeps them safe from seasonal changes and extreme weather conditions that can include tropical rain, cyclonic wind and dry heat found in Australia's climate.



"In order to deliver an apt Wi-Fi system for each of the three Smart Cities, *RUCKUS'* solutions were the best choice due to their functionality and reliability in outdoor environments," says Easyweb Digital's Sacchero.

Additionally, Easyweb Digital utilised RUCKUS solutions and developed a robust and innovative outdoor Wi-Fi cabinet solution for the City of Palmerston. The self-contained cabinet provides public Wi-Fi with load-balanced dual 4G LTE services, for Internet backhaul. It is equipped with a RUCKUS E510 access point and fully managed by vSZ and Encapto.

## CONNECTING A SMART CITY'S COMMUNITIES AND GENERATIONS

Encapto software enables Easyweb Digital to see each site as a different use case and treat them as individual cases to provide more control over messaging and network usage.

Easyweb Digital and RUCKUS Wi-Fi networks for the City of Logan, City of Launceston and City of Palmerston provide their councils with a channel for digital engagement. Encapto allows councils to request survey participation, promote local events and local businesses, and cross-promote other locations, all while their users on board to the free Wi-Fi.

A free Wi-Fi connection provides the opportunity for a myriad of demographics to connect with their local community—especially the Millennial and Generation Z demographics, who are typically disengaged with their local community and council. These users thrive on being digitally connected at all times; therefore, councils can capitalise on these tech-driven individuals by offering 24/7 free Wi-Fi to engage with them.

The implementation of free public Wi-Fi not only provides councils with the ability to reach and gather information from specific age demographics, but it enables connection with individuals in various socioeconomic circumstances and those in disadvantaged communities. The most important aspect of the smart city is that it acts as a vehicle to bridge the "digital divide," offering connectivity to those who need it but lack the means to stay connected at all times. This diverse engagement model is a necessary step for councils to formulate educated decisions regarding city planning and policy.

Easyweb Digital is committed to designing, building and managing Wi-Fi infrastructures in smart cities, and will continue to tap into CommScope's RUCKUS portfolio of wireless network solutions and technical expertise. Easyweb Digital's RUCKUS SmartZone Controller, hosted in Australia's Amazon Web Services (AWS) data centres, enables remote Wi-Fi and switch management from the cloud. This allows for seamless management capabilities as the technology enables Easyweb Digital to manage Wi-Fi and switching for RUCKUS ICX switches from a single solution.

## THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE

The future is certainly shifting to smart city living. For Australia, the growth of smart cities is driven by the need for increased efficiency of city operations strengthen local economies, and increase community involvement with local councils and governments.

To build the backbone of smart cities, councils and governments alike must tap into experienced managed service providers and leading hardware experts to build, support and enhance the Wi-Fi infrastructure of these cities. Easyweb Digital and CommScope's RUCKUS Wi-Fi solutions will continue to play major roles in these deployments.

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