

An Arena Solutions case study



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Ruckus Wireless



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Wi-Fi Technology Innovator Ruckus Wireless Counts on Arena to Make Wi-Fi Reliable for Home, Office and Hot Spot Use Around the World

SITUATION

It is no surprise that Wi-Fi is quickly becoming the de facto standard for connecting all types of computers and handheld devices. But, as use becomes more pervasive, so does concern with the reliability of Wi-Fi for supporting business-critical applications. At the same time, more sophisticated applications for Wi-Fi are being supported on new-generation handheld devices, such as iPhones, dual-mode handsets and PDAs. Wi-Fi is now expected to do more than merely provide casual connectivity to the Internet. It is expected to reliably support voice, video and data over an extended range while delivering predictable performance. Thus far, this has been impossible.

As a technology that operates in an unlicensed band, Wi-Fi suffers greatly from interference, erratic performance and poor range. In the wireless LAN marketplace, small and medium businesses and hot spot operators struggle with the problem of having no truly viable Wi-Fi choice. The only two choices they have are costly and cumbersome enterprise-class systems or cheap consumer-grade equipment that fails to address the issues of reliability, cost, extended signal range and security.

Wi-Fi technology innovator Ruckus Wireless (www.ruckuswireless.com) is the only Wi-Fi equipment supplier focused on addressing the issue of reliability and predictable Wi-Fi performance and bridging the gap between high-end and consumer-grade equipment. The company is working to make Wi-Fi reliable enough to be used as a utility in homes, offices and hot spots around the world.

THE CHALLENGE

Formed in 2004, Ruckus Wireless has become a competitor to watch in the explosive wireless LAN market. In just under four years, the company, designated as a 2007 Technology Pioneer by the World Economic Forum and named the 2007 Start-Up of the Year by EE Times, has shipped more than 150,000 Wi-Fi systems to customers around the world and raised approximately \$32 million in financing from premier venture capital investors, consumer electronics companies and broadband operators. Its growth has been rapid and demand for its products strong.

Like all other successful, fast-growing companies, Ruckus Wireless needed to continue to innovate quickly, speed products to market, manage costs, maximize efficiency and meet quality and regulatory compliance requirements, while

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simultaneously ramping up its infrastructure to effectively accommodate the crush of orders, requests and relationships that ensued as the company took off.

This hyper-growth phase had Ruckus Wireless looking for an infrastructure that offered the company a high level of control and helped it avoid potentially costly errors related to manual processes. In addition, Ruckus needed this system to be able to scale as the company grew larger to support new product offerings, expansion into new markets and greater use by more employees and contractors around the world.

As a highly entrepreneurial organization, cross-company communication was a must—marketing, operations, sales and engineering needed a strong platform on which to collaborate to bring products to market. In addition, because Ruckus outsources manufacturing, the platform had to be able to handle the added complexity of managing those relationships with timely and accurate communications, monitoring each partner and the information distributed to it. Ruckus Wireless realized that to maximize growth, it had to proactively take advantage of a collaborative tool to centralize and control its product information.

“Last year, the company did a lot of hiring and decided to put together an infrastructure that could help us move our products from concept to manufacturing more efficiently. We transitioned from managing our processes with Excel spreadsheets, email and phone calls to having one central location for product information that is accessible to our employees and designated suppliers,” said David Hom, document control manager of Ruckus Wireless. “When Ruckus adopted Arena, it solidified its move from being a start-up to being an established company.”

ARENA DELIVERS

After evaluating software targeted specifically to small- to medium-sized businesses, Ruckus Wireless selected Arena for its robust functionality and on-demand delivery model. By choosing Arena, Ruckus got all the benefits it wanted without the extensive upfront costs associated with traditional client/server software. And, as the company has expanded, it has been able to incrementally add users, so its software investment and use have grown according to the company's need.

“Our vice president of engineering had a lot of experience with Arena and was instrumental in making the introduction to Ruckus. The company evaluated other competitive products, but everyone liked Arena, especially the fact that it is web-based. The software successfully met our needs and was easy to learn. We were also able to get started for far less cost than we had anticipated, with no investment required for servers or IT support,” said Hom.

“ARENA ALLOWS OUR EXTENDED ENTERPRISE—FROM AMERICA TO MALAYSIA TO TAIWAN—TO EASILY VIEW AND UPDATE PRODUCT INFORMATION AND SEE ITS CURRENT STATUS. IT’S A MUCH MORE EFFICIENT WAY TO MANAGE OUR MANUFACTURING AND CHANGE PROCESSES. NOW WE ALL KNOW THE INFORMATION IS COMPLETELY ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE.”

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The on-demand delivery benefits associated with Arena also include regular updates and improvements that, when rolled out, are instantly available to all users without any service interruption. Ruckus appreciated that it would never be version-locked on old releases and left paying maintenance for only telephone support and bug fixes as is typical with client/server software.

"Arena is very intuitive. It was easy to get everyone up to speed. An important element in our success was training. Once people saw what the system could do, they wanted to use it," said Hom.

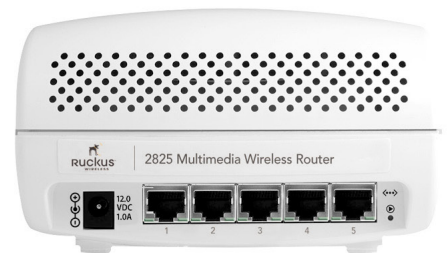
Ruckus Wireless implemented Arena in less than one week. Now the software serves as a central repository for all of the company's data and a platform on which everyone can find what they need, when they need it. Engineering change orders (ECOs) that were once handled manually are more effectively managed, preventing potentially costly errors and ultimately helping to improve quality and time to market.

"Arena allows our extended enterprise—from America to Malaysia to Taiwan—to easily view and update product information and see its current status. It's a much more efficient way to manage our manufacturing and change processes. Now we all know the information is completely accurate and up-to-date," said Hom.

Ruckus has customized Arena so the company can capture and organize information according to its needs, and then configure the way its users view that information and interact with one another around it. This has been particularly beneficial for the non-technical users at Ruckus.

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Arena has made it easy for Ruckus to efficiently and accurately document its activities for compliance. With the WEEE and RoHS regulations introduced by the European Union, Ruckus can ensure it meets compliance requirements by using Arena to track part-level compliance status and evidence. The company can generate instant reports as necessary, to minimize the risk of shipments being held at a border.



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"Using Arena helps us respond to the demands of our market more efficiently. Arena provides us a perfect infrastructure—one that allows us to expand our use of the product as we expand our product offerings and branch out into new markets," said Hom. "We've gotten an amazing return on our investment by choosing Arena."

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Ruckus Wireless has seen significant benefits from its investment in Arena, including:

Quicker ECO cycle times. With automated routings, electronic status notifications and the ability to update all relevant parts with a single change, Ruckus Wireless has been able to reduce ECO cycles by 70 percent or more.

Reduced cost of compliance. Arena compliance management features allow Ruckus Wireless to generate a compliance report with a single click, reducing compliance reporting time by more than 90 percent—and eliminating the need to keep filing cabinets full of paper.

Fewer process-related errors and faster time to market. Reducing reliance upon manual processes virtually eliminates potentially costly human errors and helps Ruckus Wireless speed time to market by approximately 10 percent.

Affordable total cost of ownership (TCO). Because Arena is delivered on-demand, Ruckus Wireless did not need any additional IT infrastructure to support its deployment. Over a five-year period, the TCO of Arena is just 30 percent of the cost of traditional client/server software.

Support for company growth. Moving from being a start-up to being a successful, mid-size company required Ruckus to acquire an infrastructure that could effectively accommodate the crush of orders, requests and relationships that ensued as the company took off. Arena provided Ruckus with a low-cost, high-powered, scalable solution that meets its needs.

Greater security. As all of its data is hosted by Arena and protected by financial-grade security, Ruckus Wireless gains peace of mind knowing its data is safer than when it was stored internally and distributed through mail and email, which are neither controllable nor secure.

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