



CONCORD

When hotel staff feel in danger, now help is on alert

- **Business needs** – Enhanced protection for hotel staff, especially those who interact directly with the public.
- **Networking solution** – Wearable security devices enable staff to summon help if they are injured or feel threatened.
- **Business value** – Increased safety and peace of mind for employees, managers, and hotel owners.
- **Industry focus** – Hospitality
- **Size** – 158 hotels and restaurants

About Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

As an award-winning hotel development and management company, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company has spent the last three decades successfully growing the company's portfolio. They have premium-branded properties across the United States and Canada: 135 hotels (premium, select service, lifestyle/boutique, and full service) with more than 20,000 rooms. Concord is slated to have more than 140 hotel properties in its portfolio by the end of 2021. They also have 18 upscale restaurants, which increase the brand value of their properties.

The situation

Concord Hospitality has always prioritized the safety and well-being of its employees. It was an immediate supporter of the 5-Star Promise, an effort spearheaded by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and many of its hotel properties to enhance employee safety. Concord officials approached AT&T Business for help in devising a system by which hotel employees could summon help if they were injured or felt threatened in any way.

Solution

AT&T Business devised an associate alert system to help keep workers safe and secure while they're on the job. The solution consists of an IoT device that staff can use to summon assistance, and Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) beacons in guestrooms that relay the signal to management or security staff. Concord has already deployed the solution at several dozen of its locations and is in the process of introducing it to all their properties.

The next generation of first-class hotels

Often referred to as the “manager of choice,” Concord Hospitality creates benefits for its partners and associates by applying its expertise in operations, development, sales and marketing, technology, accounting, and operational management to grow its portfolio of first-class hotels. Each of these areas plays a key role in ensuring all hotel operations run smoothly and deliver a second-to-none guest experience. Concord Hospitality elevates its offerings to enhance guest services and experiences through innovative technology solutions.

The company employs more than 4,500 associates across 22 states and two Canadian provinces. Consistently ranked as one of top hotel management companies, Concord has close relationships with more than 25 brand affiliations. It has earned the designation of “approved operator” with Marriott International, Hilton Hotels Corporation, Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Choice Hotels International, and IHG.

Each venue has a story to tell. Concord’s commitment to sourcing local, authentic products infuses each property with the vibe and energy of its geographic location.

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Scot A. Cameron

Vice President, Capital Assets,
Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

Its modern lifestyle holdings embody the next generation of full service and boutique hotels, distinctive restaurants, stylish bar concepts, and award-winning rooftops.

Creating the best guest experience

The company’s growth is a tribute to the strong relationships it has built with investment partners over the past 35 years.

Concord works in full partnership with its owners and investors to create the best experience for guests and the best work environment for associates. For that reason, Concord was an early supporter of a staff protection initiative of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) called the 5-Star Promise.

The promise is a commitment to enhance hotel safety with new policies, training, and resources. This promise included a pledge to provide safety devices to all associates who interact directly with guests.

A solution above and beyond the others

As the AHLA announced its 5-Star Promise, state and local governments had begun looking at the kind of threats that hotel workers can encounter. Several communities enacted laws that mandate protective measures for people who work in hotels.

Scot A. Cameron, Concord's Vice President, Capital Assets, said Concord voluntarily stepped up to enhance associate safety. "Regardless of whether there were government mandates across certain jurisdictions, we set out to protect associates through Concord hotels," he said. "We looked at what we could do to enhance the safety of our workforce."

"The solution from AT&T Business checked every box in terms of the safety it provided, the 24/7 support, the standalone platform, and the scalability."

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Concord considered safety solutions from several vendors. "We spent a lot of time working with tech providers, and it became very clear that the solution from AT&T Business was above and beyond others in the industry," he said.

AT&T has long been a trusted supplier to Concord and its properties. So, it was a natural decision to ask AT&T Business to create a solution that would enhance the safety and well-being of its associates. "We knew we were going to do it right and make it safe for our employees for the long-term, which is why we chose to work with AT&T," Cameron said.

Safety, support, scalability

Concord chose AT&T Staff Alert. This service operates through a combination of Bluetooth, ultrasound, and 4G LTE connectivity to provide micro-location data. This helps reduce the risk of interference in signal delivery that could result from congestion in the hotel Wi-Fi network. AT&T Staff Alert can be customized and is also interoperable with other IoT applications in the hotel, such as building management and asset tracking.

The solution includes lightweight devices that associates can wear around their necks on lanyards. Each guest room is equipped with a non-intrusive Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) beacon that plugs into an outlet, eliminating the need for construction or supplemental power.

The device activates only when the associate presses its buttons, which helps save battery life. The wearer must push two buttons simultaneously to summon help. This reduces the chance of false activations.

Cameron noted that AT&T Staff Alert stood out from other systems in many ways. “We made a very quick decision, faster than we had anticipated, because of the strength of the solution,” he said. “The solution from AT&T Business checked every box in terms of the safety it provided, the 24/7 support, the standalone platform, and the scalability.”



An added level of security

Staff appreciate the added protection, Cameron said. “Reaction has been positive. The functionality has been very straightforward. It’s just an added level of security for employees.”

The deployment has been very smooth, and the system is easy to operate. Managers can receive the alerts on mobile devices, laptops, and desktops. A monitoring portal enables them to see location-based incident alerts and responses. They can also view incident histories.

The end-to-end solution is fully monitored and supported 24/7. This provides hotel managers the comfort of knowing if there is an issue, they will have the support they need.

By building the solution on the infrastructure from AT&T Business, Concord will be able to add future BLE solutions from AT&T, providing the hotel with an even higher return on its investment.

Extending the value of its investment

Cameron looks forward to introducing other solutions that will benefit Concord’s properties. AT&T Staff Alert has components that can help organizations protect their property as well as their staff, including locator tags that can be attached to any asset to provide real time location information.

Other components include environmental sensors that can monitor temperature, humidity, air quality, light, noise, and water leaks. Fill-level sensors can monitor hand sanitizer stations, cleaning supplies, trash cans, and bathroom supplies. Contact sensors can monitor whether doors and windows are open or closed and presence detectors can count the number of guests or associates in an area.

“We’re very excited about the long-term benefits of the system as it is deployed for other things in our industry that will benefit us in the long term,” Cameron said. “We plan to work with AT&T Business to start testing some of those solutions in the near future.”

An excellent team approach

Cameron is pleased with the assistance the properties have gotten from AT&T Business. “It has been positive, as always. It’s been an excellent team approach and a great relationship, so we’re very pleased with it,” he said. “The senior staff from AT&T Business have been a been class act. They responded and managed the situation as it evolved, and the teams in the field did a good job. There are a lot of complexities with these things, but we feel it’s going very well.”

