

LodgeNet IPTV Solution FAQ

Q: What is IPTV?

A: IPTV (Internet Protocol TV) is the transport of TV transmissions over an Internet Protocol (IP) network infrastructure – the common technology used to transmit content over the Web. LodgeNet offers a complete high-definition (HD) video on demand (VOD) and free-to-guest (FTG) solution delivered over IP.

Q: What features are offered with IPTV?

A: IPTV provides LodgeNet customers with access to all of the offerings available with our Marina HD Advanced platform. In the future, we will be offering additional features that take advantage of the one-to-one capabilities of IPTV. These include an interactive program guide, environmental controls, and Web applications.

Q: What are the tailoring capabilities with LodgeNet's IPTV solution?

A: LodgeNet's tailoring capabilities for IPTV match those with the LodgeNet HD Advanced (coax) solution.

Q: What TVs are compatible with your IPTV offer?

A: LG, Philips and Samsung have been tested as compliant. Additional makes can be accommodated; however, not all manufacturers TVs have been specifically tested by LodgeNet. If you have a preferred set that you are considering, please inform your sales rep and he/she will have the LodgeNet engineering team confirm compatibility.

Currently, LG is the only manufacturer providing an integrated slot for the LodgeNet in-room client. LodgeNet can provide a small form factor mounting bracket which allows the client to be mounted on the back of the other manufacturers' sets at an additional cost.

Q: What are the network requirements for IPTV?

A: LodgeNet has two documents that provide further details on network requirements, but in summary, LodgeNet utilizes both MPEG-2 and MPEG-4 streams at 8 Mbps to 19.4 Mbps. Fiber is recommended from the core switch to all edge switches. LodgeNet recommends running CAT-6 from the edge switches to the rooms. The switches should have the ability to support multicast routing, IGMP snooping, QOS (quality of service), etc. Switches should be purchased from (and installed by) certified professionals. Talk to your LodgeNet Professional Solutions representative for a quote on equipment.

Q: Should I run Ethernet and coax to all rooms?

A: Many new hotels are currently running both Ethernet and coax to the rooms to ensure their properties are "future proofed." With the emergence of IPTV, many properties are adopting IPTV technology and implementing a converged network in order to realize the efficiencies of managing one network. Other properties are not quite ready to make the leap to an IPTV solution and are therefore, running both to ensure they are in a solid position today as well as being future proof.

Q: What will I save in wiring costs?

A: Your savings in wiring costs will depend on local labor rates and conditions. One wiring example is from a 136-room property in a non-union location. The cost of wiring to run one coax drop is approximately \$180 per room. The cost of running five, CAT-6 drops is \$575 per room, which would go up to \$734 per room with the addition of a coax drop.

Q: Should we install one drop to each individual port or one drop to the room and utilize a switch in the room?

A: Whether you install one drop to each individual port or one drop to the room depends on wiring costs, in-room switch costs and the variety of services supported on your IP network. If you run one drop to each room, you will save some money on wiring costs, but will need to invest in an in-room switch. The quality of the switch that is purchased is crucial to providing quality service in each guest room.

Q: Should I run fiber to a junction box outside of each room?

A: It would be advantageous to run fiber to each room if you plan to use a proximity device (Lorica, etc) for each room which will act as an IP switch to supply connectivity for TV, HSIA, telephone and other in-room devices. This is most relevant for properties that are laid out like a campus.

Q: I was told by another IPTV vendor that I would need gigabit switches in the IDF or that I would have to have a low number of TV's per 1Gb uplink trunk port, but LodgeNet is telling me something else?

A: LodgeNet tests and qualifies network hardware as well as the configuration with a testing system so that we know what the hardware will be able to do. LodgeNet also tests the quality of the video streams.

Q: What size fiber run does your IPTV solution require for each room?

A: The fiber size is determined by network hardware and not LodgeNet's IPTV solution. Please check with LodgeNet's Professional Solutions Group for additional details.

Q: What are the advantages of a converged network?

A: One single network to manage instead of multiple networks to support IP, RF and POTS.

Q: What are the QOS requirements for VOD over IP?

A: QOS requirements are the same as they would be for an IPTV system. The video packets would need to be given a high class of service as well as control packets between the TV and IPTV server.

Q: Can your solution integrate with a coax based FTG provider?

A: Yes. Our IP client card has a pass-through connection that allows RF based video streams into the television. Please note that the presence of encryption on the FTG feeds may not be compatible with the LodgeNet IP solution.

Q: What is the difference between multicast and unicast? Is LodgeNet's solution multicast or unicast?

A: Unicast servers provide a stream to a single user at a time, while multicast servers can support a larger audience by serving one stream simultaneously to multiple users. LodgeNet utilizes both formats.

Q: What are the cost differences for IPTV versus traditional coax?

A: There are many things to consider when deciding whether to install an IP or a coax video solution. One is the decision whether to run coax, Ethernet, or both. Costs vary depending on the solution that you determine is best for your property and can vary based on size of property and location. One example is a 136-room property. The cost of wiring to run one coax drop is approximately \$180 per room. The cost of running five, CAT-6 drops is \$575 per room, which would go up to \$734 per room with the addition of a coax drop. There are also significant differences in the in-room hardware costs for a VOD provider. With IPTV, you have additional capabilities in the room which allow hoteliers to provide interactive services that reside in the room versus the head end server. This allows hoteliers to provide services such as an Interactive Program Guide and in-room dining; however, the cost of the equipment is also more than a traditional coax solution.

There are advantages to an IP solution, and all of the costs need to be considered.



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