

BOSTON RED SOX IMPROVE FAN EXPERIENCE AND SPORTS MEDIA PRODUCTIVITY WITH SUPPORT OF COMCAST INTERNET CONNECTIVITY



ORGANIZATION

Boston Red Sox

CHALLENGE

Provide fast and reliable Internet connectivity support for Red Sox to help it provide Internet access to employees, fans, and sports media.

SOLUTION REQUIREMENTS

- **High-speed:** Internet connectivity must support WiFi capabilities for everyone in the stadium, including employees using laptops, fans using smart devices, and sports media posting articles and game commentary.
- **Reliable:** The connection must be redundant to ensure Internet access is always available.
- **Flexible:** Bandwidth requirements in stadiums are increasing at record speed, so the solution must accommodate growing usage at an affordable cost.

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet

RESULTS

- Fast Internet access supports connectivity for employees and sports media
- Reliable connectivity supports WiFi to the stadium for a great email and social media fan experience
- Flexible bandwidth accommodates increased Internet demand during play-offs

RED SOX EMPLOYEES, FANS, AND SPORTS MEDIA NEED FAST INTERNET ACCESS

Fenway Park, home to the Boston Red Sox, is the oldest major league ballpark still in use today. Since it opened in 1912, the park has undergone multiple renovations and improvements, including the addition of fiber optic Internet connectivity in 2010 that changed the way Red Sox employees, fans, and sports media work and play.

Before implementing Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet at Fenway Park, Steve Conley, IT Director for the Red Sox, said the park's Internet connection had two major flaws: it wasn't redundant, which made him concerned about outages, and it didn't offer the fast speed that employees required and fans and sports media needed.

"We provide Internet access to 250 employees, as well as WiFi for thousands of fans, and hundreds of sports writers, broadcasters, and photographers," Conley explained. "The sports media, in particular, require a great deal of bandwidth to conduct research, review baseball videos, distribute their stories, and post commentary on social media. In fact, every broadcast truck is outfitted with at least 40 network connections. When you add that bandwidth draw to the bandwidth requirements of Red Sox employees who transfer very large data files and fans who use smart devices to access everything from email to videos, the basic need is very straightforward: Internet connectivity at Fenway Park must be fast, flexible, and reliable. We needed to partner with a provider who could support our bandwidth needs now and easily accommodate our growing Internet usage in the future."

FLEXIBLE BANDWIDTH KEEPS RED SOX AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME

The Boston Red Sox chose Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet as its primary Internet connection. Comcast's extensive fiber network provides fast, reliable, and highly scalable Internet service to support the Red Sox. And, the diversity of Comcast's network infrastructure provides the redundancy the Red Sox required. The team's previous solution presented a single point of failure; an outage could have caused catastrophic results, especially during the World Series when sports media must issue live news updates every few minutes.

"We're a media-centric business, and the Internet connectivity we provide has to be rock solid and fast," Conley said. "Now that Comcast is in place, the media and employees can do their jobs quickly and easily. Their Internet use has grown exponentially during the past few years, especially among scouts who transfer bandwidth-intensive files of player videos before making major decisions for the amateur draft. The more videos they transfer and the faster they transfer them, the more informed they are before making hugely important decisions. When scouts get into crunch time, the future makeup of the team depends on moving data fast, and Comcast helps us do that quickly, easily, and successfully."

COMCAST
BUSINESS

“Major league baseball officials are advising teams to be prepared for fast-growing technology needs in their stadiums... we’re way ahead of the game with Comcast Internet connectivity.”

Steve Conley
IT Director
Boston Red Sox

The Red Sox’s IT team is so pleased with Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet that Conley and his colleagues recommended a second fiber installation in JetBlue Park, the team’s new spring training ballpark in Florida. “Since we’re providing best-in-class Internet service at Fenway Park in Boston, it made perfect sense to extend that level of service to the new ballpark in Fort Myers,” he said. In addition to fast, reliable Internet access, Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet gives the Red Sox flexible, scalable bandwidth. “Bandwidth needs are exploding in stadiums across the country as more and more people use smart devices,” Conley said. “When we need more bandwidth, we can ramp up quickly and easily with Comcast, without month-long delays of ordering new circuits or purchasing new equipment. Comcast gives us the peace of mind that we’ll stay ahead of the bandwidth curve.”

RED SOX WIN WITH COMCAST BUSINESS ETHERNET DEDICATED INTERNET

Fast Internet access increases productivity for employees and sports media

Now that Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet is deployed at Fenway and JetBlue ballparks, employees and sports media are more productive. “With Comcast, our scouts can transfer more baseball player videos fast, which enables them to make drafting decisions quickly during crunch time, and sports media can upload their stories fast, which makes their jobs easier,” Conley said. “Plus, we can add more bandwidth as needed at a predictable price. “We don’t have to purchase additional routers to add bandwidth; we just place a quick call to our Comcast rep who takes care of everything for us.”

Reliable connectivity to email and social media improves fan experience

Helping fans have a good experience at each game is a top priority for everyone who works for the Red Sox. “One component of the fan experience is Internet connectivity,” Conley explained. “Fans are happy with Comcast in place because they can access their email and post play-by-play results on Twitter and Facebook fast. In 2009, approximately 200 fans at Fenway Park accessed the Internet with smart phones. By 2011, that number increased to 2,000+. It won’t be long before just about everybody uses smart devices, and we trust Comcast to help us provide best-in-class Internet connectivity.”

Flexible bandwidth accommodates increased Internet demand during play-offs

Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet gives the Red Sox flexible, scalable bandwidth that can be increased quickly and easily. “Bandwidth flexibility is especially important during play-off games when Internet demand grows in conjunction with attendance,” Conley said. “Major league baseball officials are telling teams to be prepared for fast-growing technology needs in their stadiums, and they’re beginning to conduct audits to ensure these needs are met. We’re way ahead of the game with Comcast Internet connectivity and know we’ll easily comply with audits.

ABOUT

Founded in 1901, the Boston Red Sox is part of the Major League Baseball’s American League Eastern Division. It is one of the American League’s eight charter franchises and has called Fenway Park home since 1912.