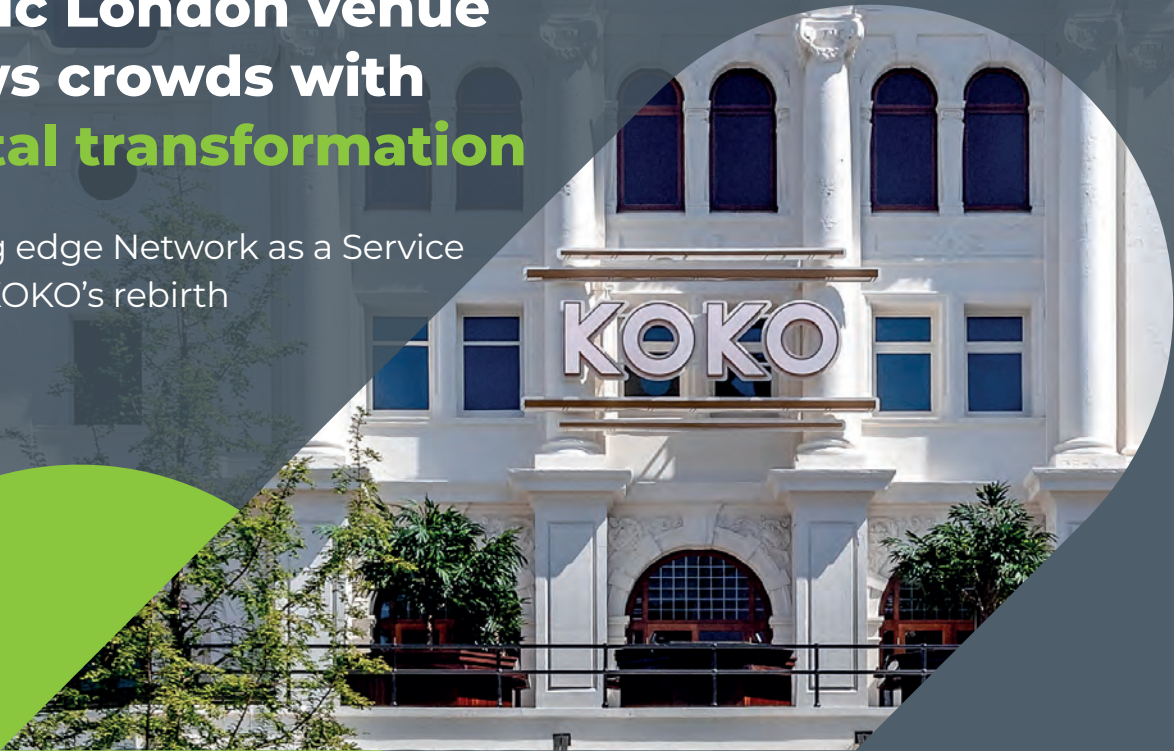# Iconic London venue wows crowds with **digital transformation**

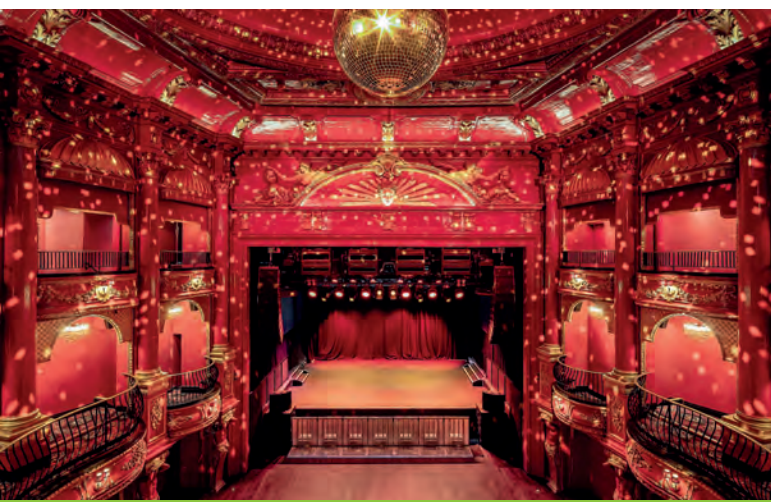Leading edge Network as a Service drives KOKO's rebirth

In Spring 2022, London's music lovers rejoiced as the iconic KOKO reopened its doors. Fresh from a £70 million restoration, this is a venue that is truly unique: a one-of-a-kind physical space and media facility that offers an unrivalled experience for live music fans.

KOKO London

Launched in partnership with SISTER, the global award-winning content company, the new KOKO marries historic buildings with state-of-the-art technology to build on a long cultural legacy and protect the city's nightlife for future generations.

KOKO's revitalisation goes beyond the realms of architecture and design. The team wanted a space where artists can create without limits, an all-encompassing location in which music can be performed, produced, and streamed around the globe. The entertainment world is going in new directions and this venue of the future needed the technology to match.

Leading the transformation

From an IT perspective, KOKO's complete metamorphosis presented exciting opportunities. Untethered by existing hardware, the team was free to think bigger, to define the experiences that they wanted to create then select the tech to get them there. Handling the extraordinary new broadcasting, recording and live streaming capabilities required a sophisticated new network with world class software and expertise in wireless technology was vital. After an extensive RFQ process, Qolcom, Aruba Platinum Partner and award-winning network specialists, were chosen as a natural fit with their leading-edge Network as a Service offering.

buildings and floors. This works in tandem with an enterprise grade IP-based network solution that offers lightning-fast connectivity for all IT and Audio-Visual service requirements along with support for CCTV and Building Management Systems.

"At KOKO we had a special opportunity to start with a blank canvas. It was like song writing, in a way. It began with a creative vision – then it's about layering on all these instruments and locking them into step so that the whole piece works in harmony. The use of the Aruba Central platform in our Network Operations Centre is the key that binds the NaaS together."
Keith Reading, CEO at Qolcom

Nightlife as a Service

Creating a monumental venue like KOKO involves huge financial commitments. The team wanted an IT partner that could deliver impactful results and Network as a Service (NaaS) was exactly what KOKO needed. A modern, pay-as-you-go model, it eases pressure and frees up cash flow at a crunch time. What's more, you simplify network set-up and management, pre-empt and auto-fix issues and stay one step ahead of advancing technology. As part of a 5-Year NaaS plan KOKO has underpinned its experiences with a network that is smart, secure, and scalable and they have round-the-clock support from Qolcom experts if ever they need it. All without any capital expenditure.

"By choosing Network as a Service KOKO makes sure they keep their edge. The technology we've deployed for them is the absolute best in class right now. But technology iterates quickly, as do business requirements and customer expectations. Thanks to NaaS, KOKO has the agility to upgrade their tech in the future to stay ahead of the curve."
Stuart Pass, Chief Technology Officer at Qolcom

Experts in digital transformation, Qolcom engineers set about mapping infrastructure to KOKO's high ambitions, all the while making sure that the technology was sympathetic to the building's heritage. Working closely with the leadership team Qolcom plotted the design for a high-performance, wired and wireless IP infrastructure over which voice, data, and multi-media applications can operate over multiple

Connecting the KOKO community

KOKO is internationally renowned as an inclusive and eclectic space that welcomes music fans of all genres and eras. Justifiably proud of the new venue, the owners wanted to amplify the KOKO experience for people to enjoy wherever they are in the world. Broadcasting in high definition to a diverse range of devices requires a special kind of network, one that securely manages a multi-tiered environment. A network with HPE Aruba technology at its heart.

The next-generation Aruba Edge Services Platform (ESP) gives Qolcom all the tools it needs to deliver NaaS. This full-stack, edge-to-cloud solution includes networking and security. Data from the edge drives real-time automation and actionable insights and built-in AI Ops help Qolcom analyse a vast body of information in new ways, so they deliver a quality NaaS to KOKO.

At the centre of the action

The Qolcom Network Operations Centre (NOC) utilise Aruba Central as the conductor that orchestrates Aruba ESP, a cloud-smart networking solution, so the Qolcom NaaS team have an unprecedented level of control. Wired and wireless infrastructure are unified in a holistic system that the NOC can manage from a single screen. The network also handles building management, security and CCTV systems as part of a 360-degree network strategy.

Access all areas

KOKO pushes far outside the box that is your typical music venue template. Vogue called it a "design enthusiast's dream" and lauded the "landmark copper cupola" that is its crowning glory. The sound engineers spoke of the challenge of getting the tone right in every "nook and cranny". Our feat was to deliver a consistent Wi-Fi signal to all points in the building, from dome to loading bay. Again, Qolcom's NaaS covers all bases.

Starting with LAN infrastructure Qolcom designed a resilient network of core routing services with sufficient bandwidth to scale and support future traffic. Network devices, including redundant power supplies, provide data connectivity and PoE/PoE+ (Power-over-Ethernet/Plus) and WLAN access points support AV equipment and CCTV cameras. And all equipment is Wi-Fi 6E grade, which delivers greater capacity and performance, superior power efficiency and enhanced support for IoT devices.

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To discuss how Qolcom's Managed Network Services can benefit your organisation, your users and your IT team, contact Qolcom on **01635 298021** or at **sales@qolcom.co.uk**