

**CASE STUDY**



# **PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE EXTENDS CULTURAL REACH WITH HYBRID EVENTS BUILT ON NEW DIGITAL LAYER**

**amare**

Create a secure digital platform to a new purpose-built arts venue in the Netherlands' capital, providing seamless micro-segmented connectivity for artists, students and the public, as a service.



The new performing arts centre in The Hague has been many years in the planning. Amare brings together, finally under one roof, the Netherlands dance theatre, the Royal Conservatoire and the Residentie orchestra. What the planners could not anticipate was the arrival of Covid.

"No doubt the last couple of years have been challenging for live events," says Leontien Wiering, Amare's Business Director. "But maybe this period reminded us of the importance of culture and community. We see a real appetite among citizens to come and experience Amare."

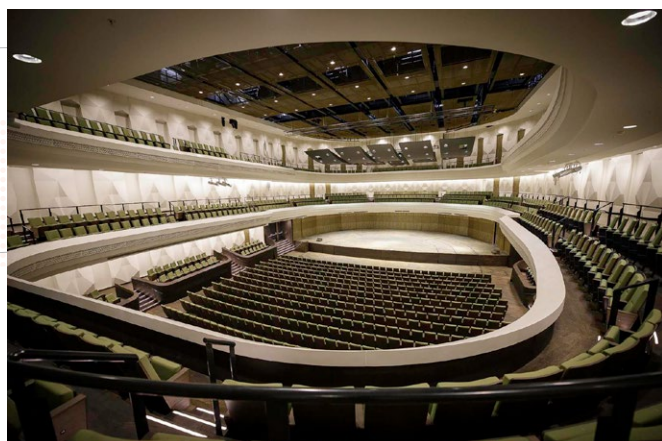
## DESIGNING A NEW HOME FOR CULTURE

Amare is a stunning building. Designed by NOAHH, it is located in the centre of the city. It includes four large theatres and concert halls, meeting rooms, two restaurants and lots of public space. The building fronts a new piazza.

"I hope Amare will be a place where people love to come," says Wiering. "A place that many people see and experience as the place to go to for dance and music. I hope that we will be distinctive in that respect. That it becomes a place where things happen, where new things are created."

Public access is a big part of Amare's remit, she adds. The building will house events, exhibitions and performances but it should also be place where citizens can stop by or meet.

It's not a traditional theatre, where you can only visit a show in the evening. Amare provides all kind of opportunities during the day to experience little performances, workshops, exhibitions, sneak previews of performances



## REQUIREMENTS

- Ensure robust network performance across a seven-floor building
- Provide the means to scale as theatres and performance spaces fill
- Secure network access with clear policies governing who and what can connect

## SOLUTION

- Aruba 500 series Indoor and Outdoor Wi-Fi 6 Access Points
- Mobility Conductor
- Aruba Mobility Controllers
- Aruba CX 8325 series Core Switches
- Aruba CX 6200F series Access Switches
- Aruba CX 6300M series Switches
- AirWave Network Management
- NetEdit for AI-enabled configuration management
- ClearPass Policy Manager for NAC
- Dynamic Segmentation
- Managed service by Aruba partners FourTop

## OUTCOMES

- Enables high-performance connectivity for guests, employees and IoT
- Allows secure segmentation of network for visitors, students, operations and suppliers
- Supports new digital touchpoints, creating new opportunities for artists and performers
- Establishes a modern digital-first environment capable of hosting hybrid events

and concerts. For these activities you don't need to buy a ticket. You can just walk through Amare and see what happens. Besides that, there is a lot of space to hang out or to use as workspace.

## SECURING NETWORK ACCESS FOR A RANGE OF USERS

As a public space, access to free Wi-Fi is standard. Free but controlled.





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**LEONTIEN WIERING**

Business Director, Amare

“There should no limit on how the network is used,” says Amir Shahali, Network Infrastructure Manager, Amare, “but we need clear policies in place for who can do what.”

The end-to-end Aruba architecture establishes a unified network capable of supporting multiple users and multiple use-cases. Access is defined, secure and entirely segmented. It means Amare can function as a place of study, host visiting production companies and be a public venue. Connectivity follows users throughout the building.

Robust and secure connectivity is assured by architecture that includes more than 450 Wi-Fi 6 indoor and outdoor access points, AirWave Network Management and ClearPass Policy Manager for automated network access control. The underlying LAN boasts a unified architecture comprising Aruba CX core and access switches. The network can scale as the usage of the building changes throughout the day, from a few hundred people on site at 9am to 5,000-plus during the evening performances.



In order to benefit from the highest level of security and adopt a zero-trust approach for network access, a Dynamic Segmentation design was implemented, allowing all traffic to be securely tunnelled through the controllers, where access control policies and VLAN assignment policies are applied.

“Security is critical for us,” Shahali says. “The Aruba components allowed us to focus on defining policies for who and what can connect to the network. This is where we spent the most time and effort: only when you’ve created the rules and the framework can you have freedom.”

**Leaning on expert guidance and support**

The network was designed and deployed alongside The Networkers and is delivered as-a-service by Fourtop ICT, both valued Aruba partners.

The Networkers worked with Shahali’s network team to create a bespoke solution to meet the unique demands on the three ‘tenants’. The result is a seven-floor, open collaboration space where each tenant has its own segmented network. Fourtop ICT also provides an ongoing workplace service under its Cloudine offering which has the Aruba architecture included as a NaaS component.

“The Networkers’ knowledge and expertise, together with its vast experience as an Aruba partner, led to the design of a smart, secure and easy-to-use network,” says Shahali.

**STRENGTHENING CONTROL TO ENABLE NETWORK FREEDOM**

The upfront design work establishes a network that is scalable and multi-purpose. There are clear rules in place for onsite staff, students, visiting suppliers and public.

The main Amare theatre (across the first four floors) and the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague (on the upper three floors) have defined but separate networks, with a similar Aruba architecture. Shahali and team were then able to build a multi-zone environment in which the eduroam SSID of the Royal Conservatoire is available throughout the entire building, as well as the Amare SSIDs, such as guest access.

“Every port is segmented,” Shahali explains. “It means if someone hacks into a network component they will be un-



able to access the other components inside the network. We have a signature for every device and every model. This required work but the advantage of Aruba is the user-friendly aspect of the tools.”

## PROVIDING A DIGITAL LAYER TO THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Aruba network establishes access to high-performance Wi-Fi for all visitors. Equally important, it can support digital applications to enhance events or exhibitions. During Covid restrictions, Amare livestreamed certain events, allowing it to reach new audiences. This service will remain even as crowds return to the theatres.

“Connectivity and a digital layer to the experience has become more and more important,” says Wiering. “We’ve experimented a lot with digital communication. Not only did we do online meetings and conversations all the time during Covid, we also found new ways to communicate with audiences. We did livestream performances and concerts, developed a weekly show online and provided people with online content on a regular basis.”

## Enabling smart building management into the future

As a high-profile build years in the planning, Amare meets the highest standards in building design. It is BREEAM certified and includes a host of smart building management systems. The network supports environmental sensors, CCTV and digital door locks. Access to areas of the site can be restricted based on network credentials.

Longer term the plan is to create apps for room bookings and wayfinding, and for the operations teams to check maintenance and cleaning rosters. The open nature of the Aruba architecture simplifies the integration of third-party applications.



## EXTENDING AMARE’S REACH AS CULTURE EMBRACES HYBRID

Digital, Wiering continues, can help reimagine the role of a cultural hub. Amare will always be a physical venue, a place for the city to gather, but the delivery of culture must be a hybrid experience.

“I think the impact will be huge and inevitable,” she says. “In a meeting with the four organisations that have their home base in the building, we talked about virtual Amare as a future concept. A concept which not only provides live experiences in the theatre and concert hall but also a digital layer at the same time. This layer can give context to the show. It can exist of background stories about the artist or the ideas of the artist.

“With hybrid events like this we can also reach out to a bigger and more international audience. It makes Amare more than a place in The Hague you can visit, it makes Amare an inspirational source.”