

ENGIE

ENABLING GREATER AGILITY, FLEXIBILITY AND AMBITIOUS GROWTH FOR ENGIE

As a leading energy and services enterprise, Engie was restructuring its UK operation — bringing three business divisions together with a newly-acquired company. But this presented complex IT challenges over how to: consolidate legacy data centres into a secure, highly available and automated new environment; aggregate disparate wide area networks (WANs); and deploy data centre interconnects.

The network team faced tight deadlines and couldn't risk any major downtime. Engie turned to trusted IT partner CAE and found a way to achieve its goals — and go even further.

The Challenge

Engie needed to effectively unite business divisions with vastly different data centre strategies — from cloud-only to everything in-house. Ultimately, eight data centres needed consolidating to two in-house locations. The solution had to allow for expansion, complete flexibility in application deployment, full automation capabilities and no restrictions on physical location. Engie also wanted Cyber Essentials Plus security certification for its data centres, so it could bid for new contracts that require CE+.

Engie also needed to aggregate multiple WANs as its UK business was developing fast.

After extensive modelling, CAE and Engie realised that Cisco's Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI) provided more advantages than a classic data centre approach. ACI offers greater business agility through network optimisation, security, and cloud enablement.

With help from CAE, Engie was able to interconnect networks and data centres through a WAN aggregation layer. In effect, this created a small service provider MPLS (Multiprotocol Label Switching)

"It's universally agreed that this was one of our most successful projects of the year. Downtime was minimal and not a single WAN change was reversed, CAE got it right first time. The smoothness of the transition was amazing, thanks to the technical expertise and planning."

- Chris Tyler, Network Manager, Engie UK

network for internal use. Each WAN was connected successfully with minimal downtime. The project achieved its objectives — and not a single change was reversed.

In effect, the two solutions created an ACI 'greenfield' build and then migrated the data centres successfully.

The Outcome

Dual Active data centres with ACI deliver massive flexibility, agility and performance headroom supporting Engie's ambitious growth plans. Network bottlenecks apparent to server teams have been removed — and performance gains have been felt across the company. There's no single point of failure either.

The aggregated WAN layer unifies business divisions and has boosted network performance. Significantly, the independence of the WAN aggregation layer from the data centre infrastructure means Engie has total flexibility over where data centres are located.

Engie benefits from WAN connectivity and a data centre infrastructure to support its growth. With any new businesses it now acquires can be integrated easily.

With its new data centre infrastructure in place, Engie has achieved Cyber Essentials Plus security certification. This means the company can now bid for new projects and seek repeat business when existing contracts come up for renewal.

Ultimately, CAE delivered the highly flexible solution that Engie needed going forward.