

Securing Safe Business Expansion

Customer Case Study



Hansgrohe SE chooses Cisco Borderless Network as its bring your own device global standard

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Hansgrohe SE

Industry: Manufacturing

Location: Germany

Number of Employees: 3400

Challenge

- To enter emerging markets and establish regional hubs in Asia and Latin America
- To minimize operational risk in manufacturing functions

Solution

- Implementing the Cisco Borderless Network for those main locations with a standardized model for outlets in new markets
- Secure access, anytime, anywhere, on any device using Cisco Unified Wireless Network with Cisco CleanAir technology

Results

- Turnover increases 10 percent as China takes top spot in international sales
- Mobile staff have secure access from customer premises to close deals faster
- Improved stock control and warehouse management efficiency, along with separation between manufacturing and administrative network traffic

Challenge

Established 111 years ago in the small town of Schiltach in Germany's Black Forest, Hansgrohe SE has achieved worldwide success. The company sells innovative bathroom and kitchen appliances distributed through multiple channels, including traditional wholesale and international projects. In recent years, Hansgrohe SE has seen a sharp uplift in international revenues, fueled by a strong demand from emerging markets in Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe.

Key to this success has been a simple but highly effective approach to expansion. In smaller markets, a single salesperson will typically start working from a home office until the volume of new business justifies overhead costs. Only then does the company progress to staffed office space.

However, this business model also brought some challenges. Production processes began to change, with operations no longer confined to Schiltach. Rapid global expansion brought a shift to a longer and more diversified supply chain. China became the company's biggest overseas product sales contributor and a key manufacturing base, serving other high-growth markets such as Russia.

"Our people are often in and out of customer premises and need reliable mobile access to merge tools and resources," says Klaus Buchholz, head of information services at Hansgrohe SE. "However, connecting more people and personal devices to the network meant we were in danger of adding operational risk because the same infrastructure served both plants and offices. So we decided to standardize IT and create a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) environment."

Solution

Hansgrohe SE decided that a Cisco® Borderless Network was the best platform for accelerating its BYOD vision, while also achieving clear, secure network separation between enterprise and manufacturing domains. A Cisco Unified Wireless Network enables mobility at the company's head office, where a Cisco Wireless LAN Controller manages 50 Cisco Aironet® 3500 Series Access Points with CleanAir® technology.



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Klaus Buchholz
Head of Information Services
Hansgrohe SE



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“With an end-to-end Cisco solution and a single global service provider, we now have standardized features worldwide, along with a common out-of-the-box approach for setting up in new territories very quickly.”

Klaus Buchholz
Head of Information Services
Hansgrohe SE

“Cisco CleanAir provides automatic detection and rerouting of wireless traffic in case of interference,” says Buchholz. “That’s very important for a firm based in a small town, with many potential sources of radio interference close by.” Wireless security was boosted with the Cisco Secure Access Control System for improved centralized management, policy control, and user authentication.

A new WAN design, equipped with Cisco Catalyst® 6500, 3750X, and 2960S Series Switches, protects the manufacturing network from suspicious traffic and potential threats, such as from the Internet. Delivering 1Gbps Ethernet speeds for instant access to information, people, and tools, the new design also includes two new points of presence in North America and China, introduced to reduce potential latency. Cisco ASA 5500 Adaptive Security Appliances help ensure effective, always-on security, and firewall services across wired, wireless, and virtual private networks.

Hansgrohe’s integration partner, Euromicron, played a key role in the implementation, bringing a global focus to the project under the guidance of its head of sales, Markus Wolfer. “We have a long relationship with Euromicron and it works very well,” says Buchholz. “Euromicron has excellent, in-depth experience of Cisco products and can manage them remotely all over the world.”

Results

Benefiting from a single-vendor solution at home and abroad, Hansgrohe is also achieving greater business agility with a platform that helps enable swift expansion at a less expense. Thanks to its Cisco Borderless Network, the manufacturer enjoys higher levels of standardization, together with cohesive global operations, management simplicity, and lower running costs.

“We are opening new subsidiaries every year,” says Buchholz. “So we needed a partner who could deliver to any country in the world. With an end-to-end Cisco solution and a single global service provider, we now have standardized features worldwide, along with a common out-of-the-box approach for setting up in new territories very quickly.” The company’s latest new office in South Africa looks set to maintain or exceed impressive 2011 sales growth of 10.3 percent.

Moreover, growing the business no longer means taking more risks. “It’s easier now to ensure continuous operations,” says Buchholz. The potential for malicious network traffic to disrupt the production process has been greatly reduced by segregating the enterprise and manufacturing domains.

“Our Cisco Borderless Network offers a high level of integration and a clear view of management in all locations,” Buchholz adds. “That’s of great value to us in terms of increasing IT performance and efficiency. For example, globally we have at least 99.9 percent network availability and, here in Germany, it’s nearly 100 percent.”

Having initially deployed BYOD to remote sales teams working on smartphones and iPads, Hansgrohe SE is considering extending the deployment to other parts of the business. The manufacturer is set to extend its Cisco Unified Wireless Network from 50 to 150 access points and is constantly finding new ways to leverage its investment. For example, Hansgrohe is introducing wireless barcode scanners to provide real time updates for stock control and provide better supply chain visibility.

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco architectures and solutions featured in this case study, please go to:

www.cisco.com/go/borderless

www.cisco.com/go/byod



Product List

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst 6500, 3750X, and 2960S Series Switches

Security

- Cisco ASA 5500 Adaptive Security Appliances
- Cisco Secure Access Control System

Wireless

- Cisco Aironet 3500 Series Access Points with CleanAir technology
- Cisco 5508 Wireless Controllers



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