

Electrical Services Firm Keeps Remote Workers Connected

Customer Case Study



SECE cuts costs and enhances customer service with network support provided by Tecnida and Cisco.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: SECE

Industry: Electrical maintenance services

Location: Barcelona, Spain

Number of Employees: 326

Challenge:

- Improve ability to serve customers and attract new business by gaining network visibility
- Resolve networking or VPN issues quickly and effectively
- Avoid vendor lock-in when contracting for telecom services across enterprise

Solution:

- Replaced existing networking and telecommunications equipment with Cisco solutions
- Tecnida eases contract administration with service offering based on Cisco Smart Care Service
- Cisco Smart Care Service provides secure visibility into network performance

Results:

- Improved VPN reliability and performance
- Reduced cost of documenting and managing data center infrastructure
- Enhanced flexibility to better serve existing customer base and take on new customers

Challenge

SECE (Spanish Society of Electrical Construction) was established in Madrid in 1912 to support the city with streetlight maintenance services. Set to celebrate its 100th year of operations, SECE today manages more than 350,000 “points of light” in Barcelona, Zaragoza, Valencia, and 80 other Spanish municipalities.

With more than 15 offices scattered throughout the country, SECE needed to help ensure that its workers, particularly its sales teams, had reliable and high-speed VPN access to the Barcelona-based data center. In the early 2000s, however, the company depended on an independent third-party services firm to keep its network, including VPN, operational. This firm provided “very poor” quality service, according to Francesc Boix, IT manager at SECE.

In addition to constantly running out of parts inventory, the support team was not familiar with SECE’s data center infrastructure design, which slowed down servicing when a system went down or network performance lagged.

SECE, which prides itself on providing superior customer service, became increasingly unhappy with this service provider. Management was especially concerned about its sales force, which was dependent on the VPN when in the field selling. “We had no control over the VPN, and it was impacting our ability to both serve our customers and attract new business,” says Boix. He also did not like that he was locked into a single telecom vendor for all his communications needs across the enterprise. “This increased our costs and limited our flexibility,” he says.

In 2009, SECE decided to replace the third-party VPN provider and purchase its own Cisco equipment for the data center, as well as for telecommunications. The company chose Cisco because of its reputation for stability, reliability, and cost efficiency. Yet due to his small IT staff, Boix knew that he would require help in supporting the data center, including the maintenance of its Cisco SMARTnet® contracts.

Says Boix, “Because of the volume of our Cisco equipment, we were sometimes unsure which devices were supported by a Cisco SMARTnet contract. As a result, if we had a problem with the network, it was hard to tell how long it would take to resolve.”



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Francesc Boix
IT manager
SECE

Solution

Wanting a local company that he could depend on, Boix turned to Tecnida, a Cisco partner and fast-growing IT services provider specialising in telecommunications that is also based in Barcelona. Known for a personalised, high-touch services approach, Tecnida partners with Cisco to offer SECE a customised service based on the Cisco® Smart Care Service. This service, which is only available through Cisco certified partners, provides actionable intelligence to enhance and optimise its customers' networks.

To further add value, Tecnida packages its own premium services with Cisco Smart Care. “Once or twice a year, we run an analysis of our customers' networks using the reports provided by Cisco, then meet with them onsite to go over our own detailed network report,” says Daniel Zamorano, director of sales at Tecnida. “We show them all the instances and alerts that were flagged by the Cisco Smart Care Service and use that information to prevent similar issues from occurring. In the end, what they get is more efficient problem resolution and a better understanding of their network and what they can do to enhance it.”

Boix was interested in Smart Care's guaranteed next-business-day advanced hardware replacement on problematic or end-of-life equipment, in addition to networkwide maintenance, monitoring, proactive notifications, and remote remediation. Having this type of support is critical for SECE, especially as it plans to extend its Cisco Unified Communications infrastructure throughout the enterprise.

“Telecommunications is our top priority, especially our connection to the sales teams,” says Boix. “But in order to support that, we need to have a reliable, stable network. Tecnida was able to provide that with its Smart Care offering.” And this is precisely why Tecnida partners with Cisco: it allows the company to enhance its customers' networks, while easing contract administration.

Results

With Tecnida's Smart Care offering, Boix now has complete confidence that anyone within SECE, no matter where they are located, can communicate with each other, with key partners, and, of course, customers. “Peace of mind, quality of the service, and flexibility are essential for us,” Boix says. “Regardless of what issue arises, we now know Tecnida and Cisco will resolve it within a day. We are very satisfied.”

Another major benefit is that Boix is no longer tied into contracting with a particular communications service provider, helping reduce IT costs. “It gives us a lot of freedom,” he says. “We are saving a great deal, because we can now optimise our infrastructure by using the best provider of communications in every installation.”

Additionally, SECE's IT staff no longer needs to document every aspect of the data center infrastructure, because it is all available within Tecnida's Smart Care service. “Tecnida tracks our inventory and presents it to us in an easy-to-digest business report. With this newfound visibility, we've gained hours and hours in improved productivity. Plus, we have time to focus more on our core business without worrying about the network,” says Boix.

Most importantly, working with Tecnida has helped SECE boost its competitive edge in a rapidly evolving marketplace. “Effective communications makes us more competitive,” he says. “We're entering the era of smart cities, where lighting is controlled from a centralised location. We need to be able to make rapid changes to system configurations, and performance is always critical.” Today, whatever technical need SECE has at any moment, whether reconfiguring the fiber or replacing a router, “the response time is lightning fast,” says Boix. “It's a huge competitive advantage for us.”

Next Steps

Currently, SECE depends on Tecnida's Smart Care service for only a portion of its remote office network, but Boix hopes to expand it to all field personnel. "As we continue to grow our business, we'll need to be agile in how we expand and change the network," says Boix. "With Tecnida on our side, we'll have that flexibility."

He also expects to take advantage of the value-added services that Tecnida offers on top of the Cisco Smart Care Service. Tecnida analyses its customers' networks using reports provided by Cisco, then uses that information to prevent common issues from occurring. "I hope to get ideas on how to enhance the network from this," he says.

For More Information

- To learn more about Tecnida, visit: www.tecnida.com.
- To learn more about the Cisco Smart Care Service, visit: www.cisco.com/go/smartcare.

Services List

- Cisco Smart Care Service
- Cisco SMARTnet Service

Product List

Networking Solutions

- Cisco VPN Client
- Cisco VPN 3000 Series Concentrators

Routing and Switching

- Cisco 800 Series Integrated Services Routers
- Cisco 1400 Series Routers

Security

- Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliance
- Collaboration Solutions
- Cisco Unified Communications Manager



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