

Government Agency Delivers Shared Services to Improve Effectiveness

Rijksgebouwendienst uses Cisco Shared Services solutions to reduce expenses and enable collaboration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RIJKSGBOUWENDIENST
(Government Buildings Agency), The Hague

- The Netherlands
- 900 employees

CHALLENGE

- Support government-mandated collaboration approach
- Accelerate client move-in to new space
- Gain operational efficiencies

SOLUTION

- Shared services to develop a project plan for deploying services to be used in common.

RESULTS

- Saved EURO€800,000 in building expenses
- Saved EURO€1.4 million in capital expenses
- Reduced electricity usage by EURO€35,000 annually

Challenge

From office buildings, laboratories, and prisons to palaces, ruins, and museums, the Rijksgebouwendienst (Government Buildings Agency) is responsible for approximately 2000 buildings with a combined floor space of seven million square meters. In addition to managing this diverse real estate portfolio, one of the agency's primary roles is to provide efficient, effective housing solutions for government departments, independent administrative bodies, and international organizations.

In 2007, the government's Coalition Agreement formally articulated a government modernization program that emphasizes collaboration between

government departments in order to better meet citizens' needs. For the Government Buildings agency, a focus on collaboration significantly affects clients' space planning. In addition to demanding more workspace flexibility, clients also wanted shorter lease terms and accelerated move-in to new facilities. In the past, each client in a multitenant environment defined its own spaces and deployed its own technology infrastructure. Bringing connectivity to the workspace could take from a month to almost a year, depending on the telecom service provider. When a client moved out, the space would have to be re-built to accommodate the new occupants. The entire process could take as long as three years to make everything ready, and with minimum five-year leases, clients were committed to the space for significant time periods regardless of whether their needs changed.

The agency decided to take a new approach with its next project, a retrofit of the Beatrixpark office building. It would provide a fully serviced business solution to clients and operate the IT infrastructure itself. By hosting common services, such as the network, IP telephony, security, printing services, access control, IT helpdesk support, and facility management, the agency could accommodate clients' needs more easily and deliver more flexibility.

Solution

Most of the agency's clients had standardized on Cisco networking infrastructures, which made it easier for the agency to begin implementing a Cisco Connected Real Estate vision for the building. However, the challenge was to provide full LAN-to-LAN connectivity between different government clients over a single IP infrastructure while simultaneously enabling each client to define their own

rules for how their domain interacts with the common infrastructure. For example, different clients had different security requirements and the agency was challenged to accommodate different requirements for each clients over the same infrastructure.

Working with its facilities management partners, construction partners, and Cisco Advanced Services and Advisory Services, the agency launched the retrofit project in the spring of 2006 with a short time-to-market deadline. Cisco Advanced Services and Advisory Services helped develop the project plan, which addressed all aspects of deploying and optimizing the shared services network infrastructure.

“We have an IT infrastructure that is in perfect synchronization with our client workspaces. Instead of having multiple infrastructures with 30 percent excess capacity, we have one. We calculated that we saved at least EURO€1.4 million in just capital expense.”

– Merijn Zee, Senior ICT and Housing Advisor

“One important element of our success is the fact that we were building on a trusted Cisco networking platform,” says Merijn Zee, senior ICT and housing advisor for the Government Buildings Agency. “Cisco solved the security challenge, and the Cisco Connected Real Estate solution enables us to deliver a set of comprehensive services as a building service. Now we can facilitate clients’ move-ins and minimize the amount of downtime associated with a move.”

The Beatrixpark building provides a fully operational network that enables each client to support its own application suite. The building network is connected to Den Haag Ring, the government’s fiberoptic ring network that links every agency’s back-end infrastructure in the Den Haag area. Today, every workspace in the building can connect to any government system that is required by the client, providing access to services and information required for that agency’s mission.

Shared services delivered over the network include all services that would normally be duplicated for each client. For example, Cisco Unified Communications provides cost-effective IP telephony services throughout the building, and clients are charged on the basis of their use. Shared printing services are also charged by usage. Facility management, the IT helpdesk, security services, access control, meeting room usage, and office space charges are all included in the rent.

The agency deployed public Internet access for common areas, such as the lobby, guest areas, meeting rooms, and cafeteria. Digital signage also is enabled over the network and used for delivering news, individual agency public information, and emergency notification to large screens in all common areas.

Each of the building’s occupants has its VLAN segment and supports its own application portfolio. This arrangement enables each client to maintain its secure, familiar private network surroundings while avoiding the capital and operational costs associated with purchasing a separate infrastructure.

Results

Initial estimates for building costs were based on the assumption that five clients would lease the space. By using a shared services approach, the agency was able to build one IT room, instead of five that would have traditionally been required, with an estimated savings of EURO€800,000. At the same time, a single IT room frees more workspace for each client. The more clients that lease space, the greater the savings and the more efficient the building becomes.

With one infrastructure for all clients, the agency avoided approximately EURO€1.4 million that would have been required to lay fiber for connecting clients to Den Haag Ring, as well as EURO€350,000 annually in service provider connectivity charges if the building was fully occupied. In addition, the IT infrastructure is fully utilized, delivering significant capital savings on duplicate switches, routers, and other equipment. There is only one equipment room requiring additional power and cooling systems.

PRODUCT LIST
Security and VPN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Firewall Solutions
Voice and IP Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Unified Communications Manager • Cisco IP Phones • Cisco AS5400 Series Universal Gateway • Cisco Unity
Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Advisory Services • Cisco Advanced Services

“We have an IT infrastructure that is in perfect synchronization with our client workspaces,” says Zee. “Instead of having multiple infrastructures with 30 percent excess capacity, we have one. We calculated that we saved at least EURO€1.4 million in just capital expense.” Zee also estimates operational expense savings of approximately EURO€35,000 annually for electricity used by the network alone, which equates to a reduction of approximately 90,000 kilos of carbon dioxide.

“I think that a success of the project was the collaboration between our team, the clients, and the building teams,” said Zee. “People were willing to innovate and be creative. We will know that the shared services model has succeeded when we have clients seeking to move in to achieve a more collaborative environment.”

The Beatrixpark building will soon house a number of clients from the government’s central administration function. Today, clients need only pick up their files and laptops and bring them to the new space. They will not need to run cables, connect equipment, or adjust systems, which will enable them to quickly settle in and keep the business of government moving forward.

Next Steps

The agency plans to deploy additional shared services environments in other buildings. With a successful collaboration between the government and private partners, Zee anticipates that more government agencies will also reap the benefits that Beatrixpark clients are enjoying.

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco solutions and services, visit: www.cisco.com.

This customer story is based on information provided by the Government Buildings agency of Den Haag, and describes how that particular organization benefits from the deployment of Cisco products. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

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