Flexibility and Collaboration Crucial for Manufacturing and Energy Group

Fast-growing group helps ensure its future with end-to-end Cisco technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Mytilineos Holdings

Industry: Manufacturing (Conglomerate)

Location: Greece

Number of Employees: 2000

Challenge

- Company growth had left fragmented organization
- Relocation to new headquarters offered chance to improve collaboration

Solution

- Cisco Borderless Network
- Cisco Collaborative technologies including TelePresence and WebEx

Results

- At least $200,000 call charge savings per annum
- Ability to easily integrate or isolate services among group companies
- Improved security with voice encryption technology

Challenge

One of the largest industrial conglomerates in Greece, Mytilineos Holdings S.A. has grown largely through merger and acquisition, and it now operates in the metallurgy, mines, energy, construction, and automotive industries. Its determination to be a sustainable business and to show corporate responsibility is demonstrated, for example, by investment and educational activities in the communities in which it operates.

The acquisition of Aluminium of Greece in early 2005 laid the foundations for a new era, because it boosted the group's commercial presence by expanding into industrial production. In 2007, a strategic alliance with Spanish company Endesa created Endesa Hellas, placing Mytilineos firmly among the leading private energy sector players. More business expansion in this sector was demonstrated during 2008 by the joint venture with Motor Oil Hellas S.A. for the joint construction and operation of natural gas-fired power plants with an output capacity of more than 800 megawatts.

All that business growth had left the company with a fragmented organization. Michael Golias, IT manager at Metka Group, a Mytilineos subsidiary, was asked to lead the project to put things right. He says: "We had four buildings in Athens housing our HQ and three subsidiaries, and we needed to consolidate that estate onto one site. That would not only allow us to take advantage of economies of scale and give us a platform for further growth, but would also enable us to take full advantage of leading-edge technology."

Solution

To integrate the different parts of the company, Mytilineos Holdings wanted a secure and flexible infrastructure that could accelerate productivity and speed application/services delivery to end users. A new corporate HQ building was constructed in Athens to initially accommodate some 500 users, and a network technology supplier was sought.

> "With our new Cisco network, we have investment protection for the foreseeable future and a platform on which we can build new features and functionalities. In addition, the products we've chosen use Cisco EnergyWise technology, which contributes to our environmental programs."

Michael Golias
IT Manager
Metka Group

"Cisco was not the cheapest of the potential partners we looked at," says Golias, "but we had excellent previous experience of its products and services in our global WAN connecting sites in Romania and Turkey, for example." Antonis Soilemezis, networks specialist at Mytilineos Group, says: "We were convinced by the fact that Cisco provides a seamless end-to-end solution. It could prove that every element of its technology was guaranteed to interoperate and could be managed as a single domain."

With the new building as a hub, Mytilineos wanted to adopt groupwide unified communications, with IP telephony at the center. Dual, redundant Cisco® Unified Communications Manager (UCM) servers were chosen to provide that IP telephony platform combined with interactive voice response (IVR) and voicemail applications.

For the core network, Mytilineos deployed two Cisco Catalyst® 4510 Switches, with the Supervisor 7E Engine, running at 10Gbps. At the network edge, thirty Cisco Catalyst 2960S Switches provide 1Gbps to 1600 individual LAN ports and desktops, where Cisco 7945 and 7965 IP Phones provide feature-rich IP Telephony. Cisco 3925 Integrated Services Routers with inbuilt firewalls offer secure connectivity to the WAN and the Internet.

The WAN connects sites in Romania, Turkey, and Greece, including a backup data center 160km distant from the HQ. Mytilineos Holdings also runs video conferencing over the wide area from five Cisco Telepresence® video endpoints in the new building. Video conferencing is also used with federated partners such as RWE.

A Wi-Fi infrastructure was installed throughout the building using fifty Cisco Aironet® 1131 and 1142 wireless access points linked to dual Cisco 5508 Wireless Controllers. The Cisco Wireless Control System provides interconnectivity with the LAN. "The wireless network supports Bring Your Own Device flexibility for mobile devices, ranging from the Cisco CIUS Business Tablet to iPads," says Soilemezis. Mytilineos people are encouraged to work flexibly, and Cisco Unified Wireless 7925G IP Phones allow them to, in effect, take their telephony with them, even to remote sites.
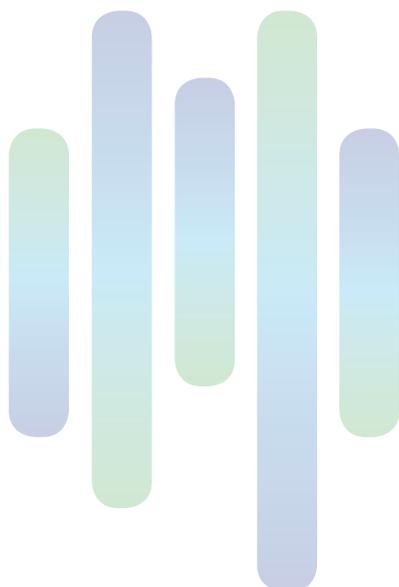
Cisco partner company Space Hellas, a leading system integrator, was engaged to manage the technology installation and deployment, working in tandem with an internal team of Mytilineos IT people. The Cisco Advanced Services team in Greece audited the design and worked with all parties to help ensure it was fit for purpose.

"It's hard to overestimate the importance of this project to our company," says Aggelos Chrysanthopoulos, infrastructure manager at Mytilineos Holdings. "There was a scant two-month window in which to complete the installation project. Our confidence in Cisco and Space Hellas was rewarded with a fault-free installation that was completed on time and on budget."

Results

Collaborative working technologies such as Cisco TelePresence and Cisco WebEx® are not only making Mytilineos a much more agile organization, but also providing productivity and sustainability benefits by reducing travel to far-flung power station construction sites in Romania and Turkey. A new construction site in Iraq is due to come online shortly.

"With an end-to-end Cisco network, we have seen dramatic reductions in our public telephone costs, because nearly all calls are made over the WAN," says Chrysanthopoulos. "We estimate that saving as more than €50,000 per remote site per annum. With two construction sites in Turkey, one in Romania, and a new one in Iraq, those are significant sums of money."

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Antonis Soilemezis
Networks Specialist
Mytilineos Holdings

In terms of security, the Cisco UCM platform enables safely encrypted IP calls phone-to-phone right across the network, including top managers' homes, and to remote locations such as Romania. Physical security in the new building has also been improved with more than forty IP CCTV cameras running over the network.

"With our new Cisco network, we have investment protection for the foreseeable future and a platform on which we can build new features and functionalities," Golias concludes. "In addition, the products we've chosen use Cisco EnergyWise technology, which contributes to our energy conservation programs."

For More Information
To learn more please click these links:

Wireless www.cisco.com/en/US/products/hw/wireless/index.html

Unified Communications www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/index.html

Borderless Networks www.cisco.com/en/US/netsol/ns1015/index.html

Video conferencing www.cisco.com/en/US/solutions/ns669/networking_solutions_products_genericcontent0900aecd805f90d8.html

Product List
· Cisco Borderless Network incorporating Cisco Catalyst 4510 Switches, Cisco Catalyst 2960S Switches, Cisco 3925 Integrated Services Routers, Cisco 5508 Wireless Controllers, Cisco Aironet 1131 and 1142 wireless access points, and Cisco Unified Wireless 7925G IP Phones

· Cisco Unified Communications Manager (UCM), Unity® Connection, IP IVR applications, and Cisco 7945 and 7965 IP Phones

· Cisco Collaboration including Cisco TelePresence C20 and C40 video endpoints together with WebEx web/audio/video conferencing