

Enabling Faster Time-to-Benefits

Department of Economic Development transforms productivity and delivery of services to citizens and businesses in Dubai.



Customer Name: Department of Economic Development

Industry: Government

Location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Company Size: 450 employees



Business Challenge

- Improve productivity and services to businesses and citizens
- Consolidate real estate and IT operations

Solution

- Cisco Borderless Network vision, architecture, and technologies
- Cisco Capital finance solution

Business Results

- Faster return on investment
- Accelerated deployment of new services and more effective IT management model
- Easy, low-cost migration to IP telephony and video services

Business Challenge

The Department of Economic Development (DED) is at the very heart of Dubai's transformation, organizing, regulating, and boosting trade and industry throughout the Emirate. As well as managing traditional activities, such as business registration, licensing, and commercial protection, DED's mandate is to support the objectives of the Dubai Strategic Plan 2015 by driving economic policy, advocacy, and regulatory reforms.

The end goal is to create an environment where small and large businesses, investors, entrepreneurs, and consumers can co-exist and thrive together. eGovernment is central to DED's vision for the future, enabling services to be automated online and delivered faster and more cost-effectively.

Rapid expansion, with the creation of several new departments for the development of export, retail, entrepreneurship, and foreign investment, meant that DED had effectively outgrown its headquarters building and three branch offices in Dubai. In response, the agency decided to co-locate all of its management and services teams within a brand new building situated in Dubai's Business Village. The move also provided the ideal opportunity to step back and re-evaluate other strategic priorities.

"Although IT worked alongside HR, finance, and facilities management, as part of a shared services organization, we still had some way to go in terms of centralizing IT management," says Abdullah Hassan, IT director for the DED. "The move also gave us a blank canvass for designing a more scalable, energy-efficient infrastructure capable of supporting IP telephony, video, and other productivity-enhancing solutions."

Having recognized that major construction projects can often overrun and overspend, the DED also wanted a risk-sharing model, one that replaced upfront capital expenditure (CapEx) with predictable monthly operating expense (OpEx). "Like everyone, we are always looking for smarter ways to procure

our technology," Hassan says. "Using a CapEx to OpEx solution allowed us to make our budget stretch. That was important, because it meant we could speed-up implementation and deliver all the benefits to users from day one."

Network Solution

In its search for a complete solution, the DED turned to its trusted partner Cisco. Over the years, the two organizations have worked closely together to consolidate and refresh the DED's various networks.

"We see Cisco as a valued strategic partner with technical support and local presence that are second to none," says Abdullah Hassan, IT director for the DED. "Our Cisco account manager introduced us to Cisco Capital. That was great, because it meant we could discuss technology and procurement options together. This saved us a lot of time and really helped to simplify the planning process."

Based on a Cisco® Borderless Networks design, the DED's new converged IP network supports mobility (via 48 Cisco Aironet® 1100 Series access points) and private branch exchange (PBX)-based telephony services, providing employees with a single platform from which they can instantly communicate and access information and tools, anytime, anywhere.

The inclusion of 10 Gb Power-over-Ethernet capabilities, server racks, power and cooling, and firewalls means that in the future the DED can migrate to IP telephony, or introduce video, quickly and with minimal cost.

A custom finance solution from Cisco Capital® allowed project costs to be spread over five years. At the end of the contract term, the DED has a choice of four options: it can buy the equipment (at pre-agreed fair market value), return the equipment (with no financial obligation), continue renting (at reduced rate), or carry out another refresh (either purchasing, or entering into a new agreement).



Business Results

Combining Cisco technology, which will be compatible with future versions, with Cisco Capital's flexible commercial terms helped ensure that the DED moved into its impressive new premises, on time, and within budget. "Meeting these aggressive timescales will help to maximize efficiencies and financial savings through reductions in real estate, travel, and IT costs," says Hassan.

Removal of previously isolated areas of information has helped to increase productivity. Employees are also benefitting from higher availability of IT services and faster application response times. As well as laying the foundations for IP telephony and video, the agency has also created a platform for accelerating the deployment of eGovernment services to businesses and citizens.

Like many organizations, a large proportion of the DED's IT budget is consumed by maintenance and support, leaving only a small remainder to spend on innovation and new improvement projects. "Without Cisco Capital, we would have been looking at a much slower, phased deployment. This would have significantly delayed our plans for the delivery of cost savings and customer service improvements," says Hassan.

Using a CapEx to OpEx solution has provided the DED with a more effective IT management model. With a traditional capital funding arrangement, organizations can end up having to extend routers, switches, and servers beyond their original intended purpose, increasing the risk of equipment failure and outages. For the DED, these issues are no longer a concern. The Cisco Capital solution has helped to improve lifecycle management and provided a ready-made asset register and inventory checklist.

At the end of the technology lifecycle, Cisco Capital can also help with asset recovery, for example, by offering data destruction, recycling, or environmental disposal. In some cases, this approach can reduce total cost of ownership by as much as 5 percent, as well as providing a much more environmentally friendly solution to placing old equipment in a landfill site.

For More Information

Details of Cisco Capital financing solutions are available at: www.cisco.com/go/capital/emergingeast.



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