O2 Czech Republic Turns to Cisco Services to Stay Ahead of Market Changes

Telecommunications provider rolls out new broadband and mobile services successfully, maintaining leadership in competitive environment

O2 Czech Republic

Size: 4,100 Employees

Industry: Telecommunications

Location: Czech Republic

Solutions

· Cisco Technical Services Advantage

· Cisco Network Optimization Service

· Cisco Focused Technical Support

For More Information

For additional information related to Cisco Services, please visit:

cisco.com/go/services

Keeping ahead of changing customer demands

The largest integrated telecommunications operator in its country, O2 Czech Republic offers a rich variety of fixed and mobile voice, data, and Internet services. Operating more than six million lines, it is one of the Czech Republic's top providers of fully converged services. Like most telecommunications providers, O2 is constantly enhancing and expanding its network, adding new services to keep up with rising customer expectations and a fast-moving market. When O2 introduces a new service, it is essential that users continue to see very high availability and top-notch performance. Even a brief interruption in service could send customers shopping for better alternatives.

As O2 launched a new service offering for its wholesale customers, the provider knew that, given its stellar reputation, it couldn't afford the risk of frequent outages and disruptions.

"We were running an IP Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network and deployed wholesale broadband services

on top of it," explains Tomáš Vančura, network infrastructure manager at O2 Czech Republic. "However, the changes introduced performance and management issues."

The O2 mobile voice network was facing changes as well, driven by its overwhelming success with consumers. The provider had recently rolled out new LTE services to all its mobile users, which spurred a dramatic growth in demand.

"Our customers use these services for everything from social networking to video streaming," says Vančura. "We expect rapid growth in bandwidth demand over the next year."

As part of the new LTE initiative, O2 updated its mobile infrastructure with new equipment and introduced virtualization and network automation initiatives to make its processes even more agile. To support these new business models, the provider needed much more than just technical support services. It needed a high-value service that was aligned to its specific business needs and laser-focused on delivering real business outcomes.
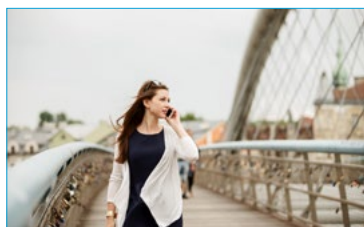
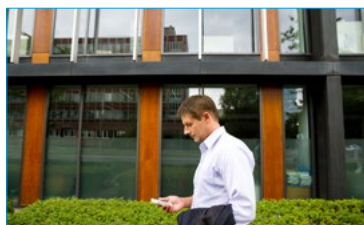*With Technical Services Advantage, O2 Czech Republic:*
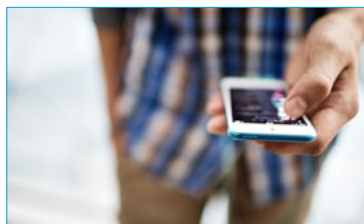
Improved network stability

Minimized network downtime

KPI goals are 99.999 percent (five nines) availability for voice services

KPI goals are 99.995 percent (five nines) for retail broadband services

Customized services power efficiency and continuity

O2 Czech Republic had employed Cisco solutions and services across its infrastructure for several years, so extending its Cisco Services coverage was a natural choice.

"We've had a long history working successfully with Cisco Services offerings, including Focused Technical Support (FTS) and Cisco Network Optimization Services (NOS)," says Vančura. "Based on this experience, we knew that Cisco would bring great added value to our network and our core business through both proactive and reactive support."

To be sure that its network would continue to deliver the consistently high performance that O2's customers had come to expect, O2 chose Cisco Technical Services (TS) Advantage. TS Advantage is a personalized, high-value, network-level service that provides a team for 24-hour technical support for severe incidents and a single point of contact for accountability. Much more than a "just fix it" support offering, Cisco TS Advantage helps O2 keep its business processes running nonstop, easily add new technologies, and keep costs in line.

This customized service offer helped O2 optimize the management of its network for maximum efficiency and keep business disruption to a minimum. If a network issue arises, Cisco offers incident management capabilities to help the provider solve network problems faster. A

high-touch operations manager (HTOM) communicates with the appropriate Cisco support organizations to coordinate resources and manage escalations if needed.

"We especially appreciated the highly experienced onsite support," says Vančura. "These contacts provided service that was professional and met our high level of expectations from a leading company like Cisco."

O2 also relies on TS Advantage for problem resolution and root cause analysis. This diagnostic and troubleshooting support helps reduce the burden on the provider's in-house IT staff.

"All our hardware and software issues were fixed within the expected time, and in every case, Cisco provided us with a clear explanation about why an incident happened and its root cause," says Vančura.

To help its staff improve its own knowledge and skills, O2 took full advantage of the knowledge management component within TS Advantage, which combines on-demand training and interactive hands-on labs with resources from Cisco's performance support library.

Navigating change with best practices

O2 Czech Republic also looked to Cisco Services for guidance at a more strategic level. The company had split into two separate organizations in 2015, which put

Products and Services

- Cisco Technical Service Advantage
- Cisco Network Optimization Service
- Cisco Focused Technical Support

tremendous pressure on its operations and management teams. As part of the TS Advantage engagement, Cisco agreed to develop an operational assessment survey for O2 to spot any potential operational gaps that could degrade the quality of service or disrupt the network.

Cisco incorporated Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) v3 best practices as part of the assessment and inspected primary areas at O2, including supplier liaison; service levels; access management; organizational capabilities; incident, problem, and event management processes; change and asset management; continual service improvement; and service operations management. Using information from survey participants at O2 Czech Republic, Cisco identified 10 areas where operations could be improved and made specific recommendations for improvement, which are currently being implemented.

Making sure of the stability and performance to compete

The changes at O2 Czech Republic have opened the door to new revenue opportunities, but they've also created new challenges for its IT staff. However, with customized support provided by Cisco TS Advantage, O2 has successfully upgraded its service offerings without missing a step.

"The stability of the network has been improved, while the downtime caused by software failures, misconfiguration, or not following best practices was minimized," says Vančura. "Cisco delivered on time

and within budget. For any issue or problem that we encountered, Cisco was able to provide a solution fast."

Even more importantly, Cisco Services has enabled O2 to achieve the dependable network uptime it needs to meet its primary business objectives and maintain its leadership role in the industry.

"Our long-term KPI goals are 99.999 percent (five nines) availability for voice services and 99.995 percent for retail broadband services," Vančura adds. "The Cisco TS Advantage service was instrumental in helping us hit our objectives."

With Cisco TS Advantage, O2 not only enjoys improved network performance in the short term, but also gains the insight it needs to maintain smooth operations in the future.

"Using the asset management component of TS Advantage helped us to better define our installed base and define the scope of support that we require more precisely," says Vančura.

O2 Czech Republic has used Cisco Services for years and will continue to look to Cisco for guidance and support as it continues to evolve its dominant position in the market.

"We would definitely like to continue with our TS Advantage Service, including a local engineer on site," says Vančura. "Cisco Services have brought us incredible value for the last eight years, and we are looking forward to continuing this service excellence in the future."

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Tomáš Vančura
Network Infrastructure
Manager,
O2 Czech Republic