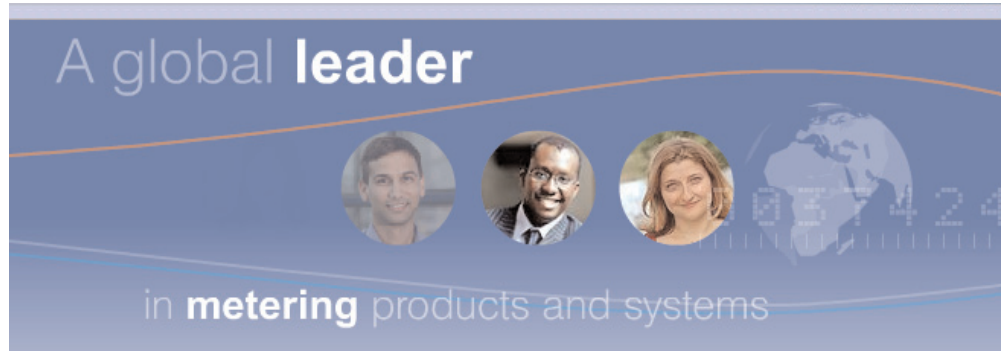


BT INFONET TACKLES ENTIRE ACTARIS INTERNATIONAL NETWORK IN FIVE MONTHS!



Using their network service contract expiration as the catalyst, Actaris decided to re-evaluate potential providers who could meet their new reduced cost objectives while boosting overall service quality. Actaris gambled on a new service provider, BT Infonet, who fulfilled all of Actaris' criteria. The selection culminated in the amazing feat of migrating 62 world-wide sites onto BT Infonet's network within only five months. Ultimately, BT Infonet's strategy has considerably increased the network infrastructure quality while also reducing service costs by almost 50 percent.

Setting New Business Objectives

With an approximate 20 percent global market share, Actaris is one of the key players in the design and manufacturing of Water, Electricity and Gas meters. When the company decided to reconsider its network service provider in the summer of 2003, it tackled a huge migration project. "We were pursuing three objectives," explains Damien Gibaud, Infrastructure Manager at Actaris, "when we decided to upgrade our network services. An internally conducted preliminary study over several months persuaded us that we could significantly reduce the cost of our network bill. So we sought to reduce our costs while increasing the quality of service. Lastly, we also wanted to take advantage of this upgrade to benefit from new technologies."

Great Expertise Combined With Excellent Listening Skills

In July 2003, Actaris received bids from six major network operators with global coverage and finally chose BT Infonet in October 2003. Since the contract with the previous service provider ended in March 2004, BT Infonet had only five months to migrate 62 sites spread across the world!

“We were immediately attracted to BT Infonet’s ability to demonstrate a very good comprehension of our needs,” explains Damien Gibaud. “It’s simple: BT Infonet put forward the right offer from the very first interview, satisfying the requirements of the specifications from both an economic and a technical point of view. Moreover, the schedule was impressive and they guaranteed valid, formalised SLA contracts. The entire offer was brought forth by a provider who had proven sustainability and the global coverage required by our geographical presence. With that offering, BT Infonet was an obvious choice.”

A Personalised Service Tailored to Specific Needs

Beginning on 10 October, the project was broken down into two parts. BT Infonet managed the first part: setting up the global network. The second part brought together a package of services including managing Internet access, hosting and administering the Proxy, Mail Relay and LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) directory servers and also managing DNS (Domain Name System) services. Actaris now benefits from a comprehensive service that spares it the complexity of managing a multitude of different contacts.

In order to gain flexibility, Actaris replaced its former Frame Relay links with connections based on MPLS technology whose throughput varies between 64 KB and 2 MB depending on the importance of the site and the number of users involved. “Principle sites over the world are configured as servers and are accessed by user sites to use information,” explains Damien Gibaud. “Thanks to MPLS, we have gained flexibility as the links are no longer configured in point-to-point mode but in multi-point mode.” For Actaris, this upgrade materialises as fewer administration tasks, thus reducing overall costs.

During the entire migration phase, Actaris and BT Infonet organised weekly steering committee meetings to monitor progress and manage any problems. “We had a meeting every week with a dedicated project manager,” stresses Damien Gibaud. “The BT Infonet team also included a technical engineer and on-site colleagues who implemented the new infrastructure. We were able to observe on occasion that our service provider demonstrated great competence, that it knew its business very well and

that its processes were fully tried and tested. In other words, we benefited from a tailor-made service of exceptional grade from a very high quality partner.”

50 Percent Cost Reduction Across Network Services

Today, after being online for two months, Actaris acknowledges that it took a risk. The network supports not only all the crucial electronic mail communication, which the

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Actaris*

company can no longer do without, but it also supports centralised applications. For example, Actaris performs a data extract daily from its business servers spread across the world in order to carry out financial consolidations from the server centers. “The network is therefore extremely critical and, in the view of our organisation, some users would simply no longer be able to work without a connection,” explains Damien Gibaud. “That’s why we needed advanced service level agreements. And from now on we have them, coupled with a level of quality that is clearly superior to what we previously had and a complete service which costs 50 percent less than in the past!”

Very satisfied with the new operation, Damien Gibaud recognises that he could have spared himself this migration and benefited from a 30 percent contract renewal price reduction for continuing with his previous service provider: “A migration is always risky but, given the quality of the BT Infonet offer, we preferred to take the risk and switch over. This is a choice we can congratulate ourselves on today, especially since, thanks to the expertise of BT Infonet, the migration was completely transparent for our users and did not at any time disrupt their daily tasks.”

About Actaris

Actaris is a world leader in the design and manufacturing of meters and associated systems for the electricity, gas, water and heat markets. Its innovative products and systems integrating the best-in-class technologies are specially designed for public or private energy and water suppliers, services companies and industrial organisations. The group is active in more than 30 countries with a strong presence in Europe, Asia and South America. For more information, visit Actaris' website at www.actaris.com.

About BT Infonet

Infonet Services Corporation, a member of the BT Group plc group of companies, known for its quality of service, is a leading provider of managed network communications services for multinational entities.

Employing a unique consultative approach, BT Infonet offers integrated solutions optimising the complex relationship between enterprise applications and the global network. Extensive project management capabilities are the foundation for the services and solution offerings (broadband, Internet, intranet, multimedia, videoconferencing, wireless/remote access, local provisioning, application and consulting services) positioning BT Infonet as a single-source partner for multinational entities. In particular, BT Infonet IP VPN solutions offer multinationals a unique combination of Private and Public IP services as well as a full set of Managed Security and Mobility Services.

Rated "Best in Class" overall in Telemark's survey of Global Managed Data Network Services, Infonet Services Corporation has also won "Best Customer Care" and "Best Carrier" at the World Communication Awards. Founded in 1970, Infonet Services Corporation owns and operates The World Network[®], accessible from more than 180 countries, and provides local service support in over 70 countries and territories.

Additional information about Infonet Services Corporation is available at www.bt.infonet.com

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