



Siemon GPS Brings a Perfect Storm to BMW



Overview

- One of the world's leading manufacturer's of premium automobiles and motorcycles
- Founded in 1916 - Approximately 120,000 employees
- Headquartered in Munich, Germany

Thanks to Hollywood, the term "perfect storm" makes most of us imagine a scenario where multiple destructive forces converge with terrible consequences. But what happens when positive forces and capabilities align?

BMW was undergoing a significant renovation of its facility, including the showroom, office spaces and service area, aimed at improving BMW's already worldclass customer experience and service levels. In addition to a major structural remodeling, this project included the upgrade of the site's core technologies - voice, data, wireless, multimedia, security and service diagnostics. Between the architect, designers, GC and sub-contractors ranging from construction and electrical to specialized system integrators was Anthony Cilfone, the General Manager.

"After finalizing the actual building design and breaking ground, I was relieved that the hardest part was over," Cilfone explained. "I knew that there was a lot of technological infrastructure work left, but was cautiously confident that the engineers and GC had it under control."

As new systems were delivered and specialized contractors began assessing the site, it became clear that there were issues. Although they had created a beautiful and well planned facility design, the architects and engineers had not planned sufficient support for the low-voltage infrastructure. The GC worked to correct this, but without low-voltage cabling-specific expertise, even they were at the mercy of a piece-meal collection of sub-contractors and system vendors.

For Cilfone, the mounting challenges of the low-voltage system threatened to become a burden. "I wanted to focus on my customers and their cars, not on managing IT."

Siemon Global Project Services (GPS), a managed services company focused on single-source low voltage and physical layer infrastructure projects for multi-site customers, was engaged to manage all low-voltage elements of the BMW project. GPS' first order of business was to review the infrastructure design and remediate as necessary to accommodate all of the corporate-driven and local low-voltage applications. This included an upgraded voice system, IT data network, BMW's innovative ISIS remote diagnostic and service system, BMW corporate LAN network, secured and customer WiFi, new 3-way paging system, IP -based video security, access control and IPTV.

Security Surveillance Integration

Working directly with equipment vendors and integrators as required, GPS provided a new low-voltage infrastructure design, supporting both current capacity needs and providing future growth capacity. The new design was an eye-opener for Cilfone. "We would have gotten up and running with the original plans, but we wouldn't have known how inefficient it would have been until it was too late. The GPS design saved us time and headaches."

With the network and low-voltage design established, GPS launched the implementation phase, managing project material, logistics and labor, utilizing their network of Siemon-certified cabling installers and coordinating outside low-voltage vendor activity to ensure the project moved forward smoothly.

Data Network Infrastructure

Literally at the center of the entire network, the data center space was the critical starting point. Having already developed the design, GPS managed the installation of the core physical-layer support systems. A full Siemon VersaPOD data center cabinet configuration was employed, giving BMW space for their current core networking and voice equipment as well as space for future expansion. The VersaPOD-based layout allows the vertical space between bayed cabinets as well as in end-of-row or standalone cabinets to be used as a Zero-U vertical patching or cable management area, conserving horizontal space for future equipment needs. Working alongside other equipment and application vendors, GPS ensured that the DC configuration seamlessly supported every BMW system requirement.

One of the most critical BMW applications to rely on the DC is their innovative ISIS system, a full-featured automobile diagnosis program. ISIS servers in the DC connect to technician workstations in the service areas. Technicians can plug directly into the car's systems and use ISIS to ensure the optimum performance of every BMW they service. Detailed and model-specific automated programs diagnose critical systems, identify service needs and even schedule future service appointments. ISIS can even allow BMW engineers in Germany to remotely diagnose cars in real time, anywhere in the world. Managing the installation of the ISIS physical layer connectivity as part of a total service center network build-out, GPS ensured the robust and flexible connectivity BMW needed to maintain its legendarily high customer service levels.

The DC also supported GPS's design for BMW's office and showroom applications. With efforts coordinated between the DC, service area and customer spaces, GPS contractors installed a future-proof voice and data network, providing highperformance cabling with sufficient flexibility and capacity to meet future expansions without business disruptions. In addition to voice and data, the cabling plant also supports the BMW corporate LAN network, secured and customer wireless access points and the facility's IP-based video security system.

Through the GPS design concept, that cabling infrastructure also integrated two of BMW's key video applications. In order to enhance the customer experience and improve service levels, BMW provides an advanced IPTV system in their showroom. With this interactive "IBM TV" video portal, customers can access BMW model information and specifications, see promotional pieces and more. The system is also used as a staff training tool, delivering multimedia training content and more. This video system runs over the same advanced data cabling infrastructure supporting the data network, offering excellent flexibility.

"Looking at the project now, we can really start to see the efficiencies we gained with GPS," explained Cilfone. "The network was designed and installed as a single, cooperative unit rather than a bunch of separate systems - meaning it will just plain work better for us and our customers. We worked with one, expert infrastructure partner rather than having to manage a bunch of contractors. Not only was this less resource-intensive for us, we were far more confident that it was being done right with GPS running the show. And, it saved money."

...A perfect storm.