

Banco CMF S.A. Installs CommScope's SYSTIMAX[®] Solutions to Ensure Compliance with Banking Regulations

SYSTIMAX Network Infrastructure Solutions are used to build a secure, quick and robust network that seamlessly transfers data



Banco CMF S.A. is the successor of Corporación Metropolitana de Finanzas S.A., a financial institution founded in 1978. In April 1996, the BCRA (Central Bank of the Argentine Republic) authorized the institution's transformation into a bank. In June of that year, it started operating as such and, in March 1999, it adopted its current name.

At present, Banco CMF S.A. is a single-branch Argentine-capital bank with Commercial Banking, Investment Banking and Private Banking divisions. These provide quality services to medium and large enterprises, institutional customers and individuals with significant assets.

Since 1994, the CMF Bank's offices have been located in the Puerto Madero neighborhood of Buenos Aires. Originally, the building had a basic cabling installation to meet the needs of the financial institution's 40 employees. In 1996, on becoming a bank, the business started expanding rapidly.

Due to this growth, the IT department increased the level of technical support and proposed a technology upgrade. It was an ambitious plan that included remodeling the IT structure and doubling the number of IT staff.

Daniel Stanizzo, Banco CMF S.A.'s Technology & Support Supervisor, noted that, "originally, there was a server structure taking 10 to 15 rack units; with the changes, we implemented servers occupying one rack unit, each with 5 network cards. This gave a high cabling density and, to accommodate this, we followed the EIA/TIA 942 Standard. To implement the network infrastructure, we chose CommScope Enterprise Solutions and its BusinessPartner, Logicalis.

“ Since we are a bank, we are subject to very specific BCRA regulations, such as BCRA's Communiqué A-4609. This lays down minimum requirements for technology management and implementation, and control of IT- and information-systems-related risks in a financial institution. In the last audit carried out at the Bank, the auditors were satisfied with the technology installed and mainly with the SYSTIMAX iPatch System, which features intruder control and network change alarms ”

— Jorge Kakias,
Banco CMF S.A.'s IT Manager

“We separated structured cabling from electrical wiring under the raised floor by installing overhead cable trays. We also took advantage of the great variety of SYSTIMAX patch cord colors to differentiate different VLANs. When you work with cabling on this scale, visual identification by color minimizes human error and maximizes the speed of incident resolution,” said Daniel Stanizzo.

In 2006, Bank executives attended an event, where they learnt about CommScope's iPatch system. The main features of this are that it protects the information flow and transfers control of essential communication channels to a higher level in the organization. This, in turn, guarantees corporate effectiveness and the ability to meet commitments to customers, partners and regulatory agencies.

Jorge Kakias, Banco CMF S.A.'s IT Manager, remarked that, “These days, banks tend to have less cash circulating inside the institution and an ever-increasing amount of data; today, money is another type of data moving through electronic transfers.”

Faced with these new circumstances, the challenge for the Bank was to build a secure, quick and robust network capable of making seamless data transfers at any time and from any place. Commenting the role of the iPatch System in this, Jorge Kakias said: “It's great for the Bank that it takes the whole network to another security level, allowing us to monitor data access and any unauthorized changes made in the network.”

When work started on the new infrastructure in March 2007, the immediate challenge was to complete the installation while existing equipment remained in operation. The data center could not be shut down, so the new and old systems had to operate at the same time.

“Logicalis far exceeded the standards set by the Bank. Together with executives from CommScope, they provided advice and assisted us in validating designs throughout the project. They also supervised and analyzed connections to ensure compliance with international standards,” said Jorge Kakias.

The network infrastructure installed at the bank includes the SYSTIMAX GigaSPEED® XL UTP (Unshielded Twisted Pair) copper solution, which exceeds the Category 6 cabling standard. This cabling forms the horizontal network segment connecting data panels to workstation outlets. Cables were laid through overhead cable trays with drop down connections to workstations.

The installation involved a total of 384 workstations. In addition, it is supplemented by the “Cross Connect” system, which separates server network access from communications equipment for services provided by third parties.

For the network backbone, the SYSTIMAX LazrSPEED® 150-micron fiber optic solution was installed, and the Data Center was cabled with the GigaSPEED XL Solution. CommScope's structured cabling was installed on four of the five floors. On the 3rd floor, the fiber backbone is extended to be ready for future installation of an IP PBX.

For the administration subsystem, CommScope's LazrSPEED fiber optic cabling is used with cable organizers to keep the installation tidy, secure and easy to maintain. The LazrSPEED Solution gives performance up to 10 Gb/s while reducing overall system costs.

“With the installation of the LazrSPEED Solution, we are assured of a return on our fiber optic investment. We can upgrade to 10 Gb/s whenever we want in the future,” said Daniel Stanizzo.

Most applications used by the Bank's administrative areas, such as Human Resources and Finance, and customer-service areas now run on the new CommScope network infrastructure. This also supports customers' online bank transactions.

The benefits of working with CommScope and its BusinessPartner, Logicalis, were key to the success of the project. Staff from the two companies worked together to build a high performance infrastructure and ensure compliance with the related regulations.

“Given the cabling quality levels required, the chosen solution more than met our standards. The SYSTIMAX GigaSPEED XL copper solution offers the necessary infrastructure to implement any envisaged technology,” explained Daniel Stanizzo.

One of the pillars of the institution's philosophy is to constantly adapt to customer needs with flexible and agile decision-making. The new network infrastructure supports this philosophy and satisfies BCRA's quality standards for mission critical applications.

With the implementation of its innovative network, the CMF Bank safeguards its business operations and ensures excellence in customer service through a solid infrastructure. CommScope's solutions were chosen to meet this vital requirement because of the support provided, the quality of installation and products - and the 20-year warranty on SYSTIMAX solutions.

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