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Springboard to a World of IT

SYSTIMAX® SCS provides cabling infrastructure for Eindhoven business hothouse

The city of Eindhoven has been a major investor in the development of IT over recent years and the new Twinning Center is its latest showcase for leading-edge technology. Designed as the ideal environment for entrepreneurs launching into international IT markets, the center is located on the campus of Eindhoven Technical University.

The Twinning concept was originated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and is based on risk capital from both government and private sources. At this Twinning Center, fledgling businesses aiming to conquer international markets can find everything they need. Business accommodation, financial support, participation in share capital, a co-investment fund and a network of strategists and consultants are all available to entrepreneurs who lease space in the facility.

Co-operation

The Eindhoven Center, is a landmark building with state-of-the-art constructure and systems infrastructure. Its aim is to nurture a stream of new companies, providing them with a launching pad into the International marketplace.

“At Twinning, we assess entrepreneurs as individuals and look at their potential to achieve rapid success in the international IT market. After a few years they must be able to stand on their own feet and establish their company elsewhere.”

Flexibility

To realise its full potential, any IT building relies heavily on its cabling installation working in combination with the IT infrastructure. To make the right choices in this area, REDE hired M&I/Partners.



Twinning Center, Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Their brief was to advise on the creation of a true state-of-the-art infrastructure that would meet the entire center's needs with minimum risk.

The cabling chosen was SYSTIMAX® Structured Connectivity Solutions (SCS). The network contract was won by A2 Networks, which built both the structured cabling system and the switched network. A primary reason for the selection of A2 was its strong track record in installing large systems using SYSTIMAX SCS.

“Flexibility and scope for lessees to expand rapidly were the priorities - we knew our start-ups would require many connections to support high volumes of Internet traffic,” said Jack de Turck, Interim Director, REDE. “To meet this need, A2 advised us to install both UTP (unshielded twisted pair) and fiber-to-the-desk.”

100 Mb/s and Gigabit Ethernet

On the basis of price and quality, the center opted for a switched network, supplied by Avaya. With the solution offered, Twinning start-ups can grow both horizontally and vertically inside the building. This is necessary since it is not always possible to give a company adjacent offices for expansion when they grow rapidly.

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Each company in the center has its own VLAN (virtual LAN), ensuring flexibility and security, and they can hire their own server cabinets. The fiber-to-the-desk option they are offered not only provides high communications capacity, it also helps bring the potential of this medium to users attention.

Currently, there are 18 UTP connections in each 25m office. Four of these are 100 Mb/s dedicated connections extending to the backbone switch. There are also extra ports available to lessees when these are needed.

The LAN uses Avaya Cajun equipment to provide a 3-layer functionality and performance in all work areas. The heart of this set-up is a Cajun P880 - the first of these to be supplied in The Netherlands. The building's five floors each have Cajun P330-series and, at present, there are almost 400 RJ45 ports of 100 Mb/s available.

The entire network has more than 1,800 SYSTIMAX GigaSPEED connections, and 100 fiber-to-the-desk connections. Communications rooms, containing SYSTIMAX PATCHMAX® (RJ45) patching hardware, and server rooms are redundantly connected to a multimode optical backbone running Gigabit Ethernet to guarantee a high LAN uptime.

Additional capacity has already been installed, ensuring that all lessees are able to use the network simultaneously, if necessary. Among the other facilities available to lessees are singlemode glass fiber links to the TU Eindhoven network infrastructure, and gigabit LAN/WAN connections. They can also make use of a server room in the building to house their computers.

In addition to a fully redundant central network switch, there are UPS (uninterruptable power supplies) and redundant network connections to the switches in each room. This enables lessees to retain half their connections in cases of equipment malfunction on their floor.

“At each stage, we made choices that would ensure continuity for businesses, some of which operate 24-hours a day,” said Jack de Turck, Interim Director, REDE. “As a good landlord, REDE believes that all facilities should be guaranteed.”

Time Pressure

In addition to fiber and a UTP infrastructure, A2 Networks also advised on the high-end network equipment supplied by Avaya, and handled access control, security and the Central Antenna System.

Hub Luijten, Account Manager at A2, was the Twinning Center project leader. Although the building was completed in a year, he only had six weeks to install the cabling infrastructure. The total path, from design to installation and configuration of network equipment, finishing off by storing all drawings, fiber and UTP test reports on CD-ROM, was just 8 weeks in duration.

“Thanks to the co-operation of Distribution Partner Anixter in the supply of products and know-how, we were able to achieve a great deal very quickly,” He said. “It has been a showcase for all concerned and we are glad to have been able to play a part in this important project alongside Avaya, SYSTIMAX SCS and its other partners.”

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