

INSURANCE COMPANY TAKES CONTROL WITH ENVIRONET

A Vertiv Case Study



ABOUT THE COMPANY

One of the largest non-public companies in Ohio, this leader in personal and commercial lines of property-casualty insurance was founded when a small group of community leaders came together to form an insurance company to protect the property of local farmers, and it now serves customers throughout the United States.

The company provides personal insurance in 10 states, commercial insurance in 21 states, and surety products in 50 states through a network of more than a thousand independent agencies.

This insurance company was founded on a rich tradition and the cultivation of lasting relationships. Maintaining and strengthening these relationships means being able to ensure business continuity.

Background

When first evaluating data center infrastructure management (DCIM) systems for a primary data center and 25 edge locations, this growing company needed a vendor-neutral solution that could communicate to multiple protocols such as BACnet, Modbus and TCP/IP. The company also sought a solution that could be integrated with its existing building management system (BMS).

Case Summary

Location: One enterprise data center located at the company headquarters in Ohio and 25 edge locations scattered throughout the United States

Solution: Vertiv™ Environet data center monitoring system

Critical Need: With continued growth and the need for distributed digital assets, this insurance company wanted improved visibility and control of its portfolio of diverse equipment that used varying communication protocols. Primarily, the company needed a holistic view of its assets for effective management of its network from core to edge.

Results:

- Improved uptime
- Increased cooling efficiency
- Enhanced safety
- Better asset management
- More educated workforce

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Solution

As this Ohio-based insurance company continued to grow, their IT network become more and more distributed, creating the need for better visibility and control of assets across multiple locations. More importantly, the company needed a system that would enable integration of multiple types of communication platforms from different vendors and one that would also connect to the existing BMS. The Vertiv™ Environet solution met these requirements and provided a holistic view of operational information from all of the company's critical facilities across the nation.

After the initial deployment of Environet, the technology lead for this insurance company quickly found additional ways the monitoring system helped his operation, including improved uptime, increased efficiency, enhanced safety, better asset management, and more training and support for his workforce.

No Downtime During Renovations

Not long after Environet deployment, this insurance company was going through a construction phase in which a wing was added to its headquarters. At the same time, the existing facility built in 1955 was being remodeled. The data center is located on a lower floor of this facility while the pumps for the cooling systems are situated a few floors above it, requiring the glycol lines to span multiple floors to feed their computer room air conditioning (CRAC) units.

The lines were in the way of the remodeling, so construction teams had to move them without shutting down the data center. They accomplished this by installing a second glycol loop and gradually moving CRAC units out of the way, requiring them to be turned off at times.

Environet allowed the technology lead to monitor the temperature in the data center in real time during these moves to maintain the desired levels. Because of its new monitoring capabilities, the insurance company experienced zero downtime during this major renovation.

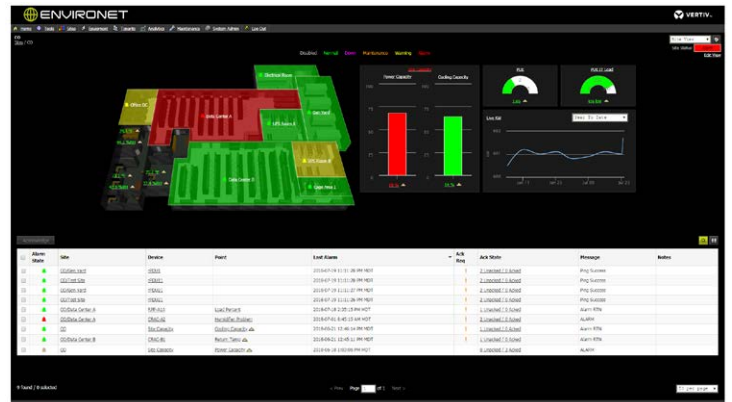
Improved Response Time for Downtime Prevention

Due to the lower floor location of the data center, this insurance company takes potential leak risks seriously. It uses a leak detection system that is integrated with Environet to monitor water threats. The visual floorplan in Environet flashes where a leak is occurring, so the technology team can respond quickly. In fact, the company recently expanded its leak detection system as an additional precaution and found that getting the Environet floorplan updated happened fast with a call to the Vertiv team, which made the company's expansions hassle-free.

If the company were to experience a leak, the Environet system would provide immediate notification, allowing issues to be resolved prior to damage or downtime. And being in the business, the technology lead knows "it's a good piece of insurance to have."

First Responder Safety

This insurance company chose to have its fire panel connected to Environet which allowed for displaying a detailed floorplan showing smoke sensor locations on the ceiling and under the raised floor. The security team is given access to this system in case there is ever an issue. When first responders arrive, they can look at the map and know the location of the problem rather than entering the room and putting themselves in danger. This allows them to take informed action.



"I was able to show that where the vendor was saying he would save us \$1,000 a month, in reality, it was only a savings of about \$230 a month. That kind of information is very helpful for us ... when we go to purchase new hardware."

Informed Hardware Purchases with Return on Investment Calculation

When the data center manager of this insurance company was asked to make recommendations on additional hardware purchases that could save on energy costs, he was able to use Environet to establish ROI.

He used Environet to research how much energy they were currently using on their storage area network (SAN) cabinets from a day-to-day and a month-to-month perspective. He identified how much kilowatt hours they were using, compiled it for his managers, and calculated the current cost.

Using the specification he was given for the preferred solution, he was able to show that although the vendor was saying he could save the company \$1,000 a month, in reality, it was only a \$230 savings each month. Ultimately, the Environet system allowed this company to make more informed purchasing decisions.

Increased Cooling Efficiency

In another example, the same manager was considering turning a section of the main data center into a cold aisle for improved efficiency. But, he needed to show the ROI to get the budget approved for the hardware purchase. Using temporary materials to contain the cold aisle, he turned off the nearby CRAC unit and tracked the temperature changes with Environet.

With the information collected by Environet, the data center manager was able to show that implementing high-flow floor panels and putting doors on the end of the aisles would allow him to shut off an entire CRAC unit. He calculated that the purchase of the hardware would be recovered within 18 months of installation.

Controlled UPS Shutdown for Edge Locations

With visibility into 25 remote edge locations, the technology lead for this insurance company can alert local teams immediately if a power issue occurs. This allows his local teams to perform a controlled shutdown of the UPS before the company runs out of battery backup power, thus eliminating any equipment damage and extending the service life of both the batteries and UPS units.

Smart Software with Intelligent Hardware

The ability to use Environet with intelligent power distribution units (PDUs) has given this insurance company better-than-expected control of their digital assets. While the technology lead agrees that there is a little more upfront costs, he feels the benefits far exceed the higher price tag.

The outlet-level control allows for prompt notification if anything gets unplugged. This functionality ensures that IT team members are aware of any system modification, giving them peace of mind that their equipment is maintained and operating as intended.

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Training and Support

The purchase of Environet has given this insurance company a partner in education and training. The support includes detailed product training, as well as access to a library of user videos that is consistently updated with new features and best practices. Additionally, the company is located within driving distance to Vertiv Academy, where new team members can get hands-on, personalized training, allowing them to stay current on technical knowledge, best practices, and trends — a key to effective data center management.

This insurance company was founded on relationships and therefore takes pride in helping its customers protect what they care about most, including their personal information and other data. Ensuring this type of protection required a data center monitoring solution that could integrate into other business systems for visibility that promotes business continuity.



*"We love Vertiv Environet.
It meets our needs perfectly."*

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