

CASE STUDY



GERMANY



MANUFACTURING

GERMAN ENERGY SUPPLIER ACCELERATES DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WITH CONSISTENT NETWORK PLATFORM

The TEGA logo is located in the bottom left corner of the page. It features the word "TEGA" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Switch network operations to a managed service to free team to focus on digital innovation



These are momentous times in the global energy market. Price rises, sustainability demands and concerns over supply chain security are causing many to question old certainties. For the entrepreneurial, uncertainty spells opportunity.

“TEGA is a €100m business with about 75,000 customers,” says Christian Petersen, CIO, TEGA. “We can fill and supply LPG and a wide range of non-flammable as well as flammable refrigerants of synthetic or natural origin, supporting our customers in moving towards usage of more environmental-friendly refrigerants according to EU climate goals. Whether heat or cold refrigerants are needed, we can supply the right gas.”

EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITY WITHIN THE ENERGY INDUSTRY

Analysts predict the market for LPG will grow 6.5% each year to 2030. LPG is seen as dependable, efficient and more environmentally friendly than alternatives. It can also be easily transported and stored.

TEGA, one of Germany’s leading suppliers of refrigerants and liquified petroleum gas (LPG), wants a slice of this growth market. Having been acquired by Ireland’s DCC Group in 2018, the business is gearing up for expansion. It is lining up a move into non-carbon, renewable energy and international expansion. Acquisitions are likely.

Key to growth will be presenting a consistent, connected business, one that is capable of responding quickly to new opportunities. A unified network sits at the heart of this agility and will be a key component of TEGA’s digital transformation. TEGA envisions a business where digital touchpoints enable it to track goods, plan logistics and engage with customers.



REQUIREMENTS

- Upgrade network to accelerate digital transformation
- Establish a managed service with clear SLAs
- Create a consistent network experience for users

SOLUTION

- Aruba Central cloud-based infrastructure & service management
- Managed Network-as-a-Service by Aruba Partner, Bechtle AG
- Aruba Unified Wired and Wireless Infrastructure
- Aruba AP-500 series Wi-Fi 6 Access Points
- Aruba 2930 series of Access Switches
- Aruba 2540 series Access Switches
- Zero Touch Provisioning

OUTCOMES

- Establishes consistent management of dispersed network
- Relieves burden on inhouse network operations teams
- Delivers seamless mobility across five locations
- Simplifies onboarding of new acquisitions
- Prepares the organisation for a full NaaS operating model

“We want to be able to extend and expand our network as the business grows,” explains Petersen. “We need central visibility of network use and the means to scale up or down as required. This will deliver operational benefits, establish group-wide consistency and provide a platform for digital transformation.”

HANDING OFF TO A MANAGED SERVICE

What Petersen does not want to do is direct resources to managing the network. TEGA remains happy to invest in network hardware, he explains, but operational management can be handed off.



“The Aruba Central platform was the perfect way for managing our entire network from one position. I believe we are the first Aruba customer in Germany to move onto Aruba Central, and I have no problem being early. It’s what we have been waiting for.”

CHRISTIAN PETERSEN
CIO, TEGA

“Our business is dispersed, we don’t want to be travelling between sites managing the latest switch configurations,” Petersen explains. “We want unified control and visibility.”

The TEGA network presents a unique challenge. The company spans five sites across Germany – a head office in Würzburg, plus filling depots. It requires double the amount of access points in its warehouses to count the number of metal cylinders.

“Monitoring is extremely important,” Petersen says. “If we lose one access point in a warehouse our forklift drivers are working blind. They rely on tablet devices to locate cylinders and fulfil orders.”

Early adopters of Aruba Central

The new unified network sees TEGA move away from another leading vendor to the Aruba architecture. It is delivered as-a-service by Bechtle, a long-term supplier to TEGA and an

Aruba Platinum Partner. Bechtle integrated the entire wired and wireless environment into the Aruba Central cloud-based platform and manages the entire network from this single point.

“We trusted Bechtle’s advice on the Aruba architecture, and Aruba Central was ideal for managing our entire network from one place with a Zero Touch approach. I believe we were the first Aruba customer in Germany to move onto Aruba Central, and I have no problem being early. It’s what we have been waiting for.”

The structured rollout took only a few days and required downtime of only a few minutes per switch. Bechtle connected the WLAN environment without any downtime whatsoever. “We have automated scripts and policies for the configuration of our switches and APs, and can apply these centrally,” Peterson adds.

DIRECTING TIME AND RESOURCE TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Today, Bechtle maintains and manages the network remotely via Aruba Central. This means TEGA avoids the need to hire additional staff to manage the network, with Bechtle technicians on-site quickly should there be an incident. The Bechtle managed service establishes certain SLAs; Petersen says these will be refined as the service evolves:

“Thanks to Aruba and Bechtle, we now have a modern, secure network that can be quickly restored after an incident as Bechtle’s disaster recovery plan means we always have a backup of the most recent configuration. We have built up our corporate network together.”

Time and resource not spent directly managing the network can now be better deployed. TEGA is working to digitalise its logistics: deliveries are signed for off tablets; warehouse teams use digital barcode scanners; customers can order online; cannister levels can be checked remotely.

“We want at least 50% of our cannisters to have remote sensors installed within the next couple of years. We see digital as an opportunity to find operational efficiencies,” says Peterson. “Savings made in logistics and the supply chain will lead to fewer emissions and lower costs.”

Enabling Zero Touch, remote network management

The TEGA managed service is the latest in a series of Bechtle wins involving Aruba Central. The service provider, based in





Nackarsulm, Germany, now manages more than 20 Aruba customers through the Aruba Central platform, many of which have migrated from Aruba AirWave to Central.

Marcus Debald, Key Account Manager at Bechtle, says Aruba Central is fundamental to the company's Network-as-a-Service offering. It allows visibility and control from one location for networks across Germany, each fully secure and segmented.

"We have no need to travel to each customer site for every little configuration or troubleshooting," he explains. "We're able to deliver a more regular, engaged service to customers, with detailed reporting on their network performance. Being able to create bespoke SLAs allows us to drive greater value."

Eliminating network downtime, with expert support on-demand

Success for TEGA, says Petersen, is a network with no failures. Network downtime is all but eliminated, users are now used to a superior service. Bechtle is on hand if there is an issue, with a four-hour response SLA.

"We were looking for an easy way to share the latest device configurations for switches and access points with external technicians. We have that with the managed service from Bechtle," says Petersen.

This facility will be critical as the business expands and needs to onboard new locations. TEGA is opening up new sales outlets across Germany and started sales in Austria in 2021.

"From my point of view, the network components are not given enough attention in IT emergency management. The LAN and WAN connections are essential when you have different branches. The Aruba architecture allows us to securely segment different users."

TOWARDS A TRUE NETWORK-AS-A-SERVICE

The effectiveness of the managed service is being monitored by the broader DCC Group. The group consists of several separate business units and network consolidation would generate obvious cost and management efficiencies. A centrally managed service would also provide the scalability and cost transparency to better facilitate mergers and acquisitions.

"Our experience is of great interest to the group," says Petersen. "All parts of the business have their own digital transformation plans."

The group wants to encourage different business units to test their own innovation and for this innovation to be shared and promoted with other units.

The adoption of Aruba Central as a service delivery platform, Petersen adds, reflects TEGA's embrace of cloud solutions. "We remain a hybrid environment but the general strategy is to move to cloud solutions in the coming years. At present we own our network hardware but it is likely we will move to a consumption-based NaaS in the future."



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