

Multinational Online Gambling Company: Customer Case Study

Viadex sources, configures, and delivers IT solution and equipment for new datacentre set-up in Taiwan.

“Viadex inspected everything prior to shipping and in one instance found a fault which they worked with the vendor to rectify. The care and attention they paid to every aspect of this project impressed me enormously.”

– Team Leader, IT Infrastructure, Multinational Online Gambling company

Problems Solved

- ✓ Latency issues in SE Asia
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with international regulations
- ✓ Organising every aspect of complex documentation requirements:
 - Import requirements/export licenses
 - Customs documents, duties, taxes
 - Incoterm guidance
- ✓ Assessing best vendor options for the equipment specified and balancing solutions against price and immediate availability

Benefits

- ✓ Establishing its own datacentre enables the company to drive significant connectivity improvements for its cloud services
- ✓ Higher quality of customer experience
- ✓ The Viadex global supply and logistics service provided a single point of contact for all matters legal, bureaucratic, logistical, and financial
- ✓ A personal service that many shippers cannot replicate; giving the guarantee that a real and concerned person was always on the case
- ✓ Purchasing power economies of scale passed onto client, at pricing levels that clients cannot achieve by going direct
- ✓ Viadex transparency in step-by-step tracking provided complete business confidence

Use case: equipment provided

- Cisco switches
- HPE ProLiant DL160 and DL180 Gen9 servers
- Firewalls
- Load balancers

All sourced, DOA tested and configured in the UK. Prepared at the Viadex implementation centre with a standard onward delivery to client within 7 working days.

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The operational challenge: When slow play is not an option

The IT team at Viadex's client company was tasked with setting up a datacentre in Taiwan to serve a global online gambling company's potential business growth in the region. The main driver for this project was a latency problem, which the client described as the number one issue in South East Asia. Many companies experience the same difficulties.

Speed is essential to competitive advantage

The internet speed from London to Taiwan was unacceptably slow at 200 milliseconds. This makes it four times slower than average speeds in England and France, for example, at 50 milliseconds. Slow speeds cause poor delivery quality. For any operation where customer experience depends on the simultaneous and instantaneous opening of hundreds of image files, latency is critical both to customer enjoyment and to back-end transactional efficiencies.

While sheer physical distance accounts for part of the problem, the national infrastructure backbone in this region also tends not to be as robust as it is in territories such as Europe and the USA. Commercial organisations frequently have to look to their own resources and systems to resolve issues around connectivity. They cannot rely on either their services providers or national bodies to offer the solution.

Until the decision to set up the Taiwan datacentre, the company had been depending on its servers in Japan, Singapore, and the Philippines. They could have served Taiwan and the broader Asian market from Singapore, but could not risk the likelihood of packet loss that might occur even this close to the market.

We wanted a company that could deliver what was needed within budget and also help us achieve our business goals

Breaking with tradition

Many European companies set up datacentre operations in Singapore to serve the region, even though the service they ultimately deliver can be further improved upon by going deeper in-market.

The only way to drive the efficiencies required was to be in the market; where it all happened. The lack of established routes beyond Singapore created further complexities for the logistics part of the project, where Viadex was able to reveal a winning hand.

A journey through layers of customs procedures, mountains of documentation, intricacies of currency exchanges, and linguistic differences.

The logistics challenge: streamlining the global IT supply chain

For the technical specification, the client team created a precise shopping list; they knew exactly what equipment and systems they required. Bringing the datacentre to life required something else, however – the knowledge of how to source the kit, configure it, and get it to its destination.

"We wanted a company that could deliver what was needed within budget and help us achieve our business goals," says the client. "I heard about the international shipping knowledge that Viadex have and the manpower they have to contact multiple vendors and balance everything that needed to be done against a great price.

This was the help we needed. We did not know which vendors to choose, what we could expect for the budget, and how to get the equipment to where it was needed. Viadex sorted everything out."

'Sorting everything out' would involve a journey through layers of customs procedures, mountains of documentation, intricacies of currency exchanges, and linguistic differences. It would also be necessary to un-box and test the equipment purchased, reconfigure it for the client specifications, repack, and ship.

The Viadex solution: No country is too far

While the client company knew what sort of hardware was required to improve the global connection, it was moving into uncharted territory when it came to exploring not just vendor offerings, but the right product balanced against the right price and – critically – being available within the specified timeframe.

Viadex have long established relationships with a wide range of world leading vendors; companies that invariably define the categories in which they operate. As a result of regularly shipping across five continents, the Viadex team also secures highly competitive prices, reflecting a degree of purchasing power many clients have not attained.

Viadex provided an Importer of Record service, making sure that all international and local documentation requirements were met

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Close relationships with vendors enable Viadex to expedite client orders but do not influence choice of technology. Viadex places high value on its ability to provide objective consultancy; recommending the kit that is right for the task. This independent view then extends to the testing phase when Viadex takes delivery of equipment – nothing is taken for granted. All items are de-boxed at the Viadex integration centre for rigorous DOA testing and configuration to client's specification as required.

We worked with HPE for the server requirement for this client, and building the servers to deliver on the high-performance requirements to deal with the identified latency issues. Viadex solution architects created the active configuration spec. After that, the servers went back in their boxes and off on their own journey to the final destination.

THE RESULTS: Consolidation, coordination and global compliance

The hardware set off on an approximate 7,000-kilometre journey with the Viadex account manager, the single point of contact, shadowing it every step of the way. Viadex provided an Importer of Record service, making sure that all international and local documentation requirements were met and that the shipment was legally compliant from every perspective – from customs regulations, duties and taxes payable to freight regulations followed to the letter.

'Twas the season to be jolly

Viadex has a local presence in Singapore, giving the team a first-hand knowledge of the area, its legal and logistics arrangements. The client did not have to worry about any aspect either of the technical configuration or the shipping of the hardware across the world. The order was transacted around the Christmas period and was in transit when Christmas fell. As the season of goodwill got underway, international shipping orders didn't. Delays were inevitable.

Masters of the art

Viadex's account manager checked regularly throughout the holiday period exactly where the shipment was, how long the delays would be, how quickly normal services would be resumed, and what the implications would be to final delivery expectations. The client was never less than up-to-the-minute informed and in possession of all available status information.

The client team has praised Viadex for this level of commitment to customer service and, as the company embarks upon rolling out further global datacentres, has pledged to return to Viadex.

"There is no reason not to use Viadex next time," says the client. "Otherwise I would have to take it all on myself. This is not what we do. We have neither the skills, nor the desire to take on all that stress. We will simply be asking Viadex to repeat a process I believe they are masters in."