

Case study

Gatwick Airport: Delivering simplicity at scale

Start date
2012 - present

Size of site
>250,000 m²

150km
enhanced fibre backbone cabling

4500
IP CCTV cameras

1200
ACS door deployments

1000+
Wifi Aps deployed

30,000
fibre ports under management

100,000
UTP ports under support

“A unified approach allows almost all installation work to be undertaken by one multi-skilled service provider.”

Peter Rodel Senior Construction IT Project Manager, Gatwick Airport



Serving over 46 million passengers every year, Gatwick Airport is the world's busiest single-runway airport.

And this vital international transportation hub is undergoing a major improvement and expansion programme. As part of these extensive refurbishments, a comprehensive network upgrade is taking place – moving a host of key systems to a common IP platform.

Managing and delivering the necessary network, cabling and specialist systems is a substantial endeavour, played out across a campus covering over 250,000 square metres – with the added complexity of delivering the upgrades on live systems and within operational airport constraints.

The challenge

The sheer scale of the operation is the key challenge for the LMG team at Gatwick.

Aside from the size of the estate, keeping track of the installation of new cabling and the huge range of specialist systems – from CCTV cameras, Wi-Fi access points and security systems to telephony, baggage handling, check-in and even flight information displays – presents a monumental task.

To keep the airport running smoothly during the period of change, maintaining the quality of any installation work is crucial. Consequently – and with the move to a common IP platform – the Gatwick project management team needed to simplify and streamline the delivery process.

“Previously each individual system – cabling, security and so on – was delivered and managed through separate specialist sub-contractors,” explains Peter Rodel, Senior Construction IT Project Manager at Gatwick Airport. “This created unnecessary complexity, so we took the decision to migrate the physical deployment of devices into a converged service delivery model. Rather than having multiple subcontractors working in the same area, a unified approach allows almost all installation work to be undertaken by one multi-skilled service provider.”

Why LMG?

Gatwick appointed LMG as the airport's principle infrastructure framework service provider in 2012 – and the team are very familiar with the demands of working in a high security, high availability environment.

LMG's framework contract provides simplified on-site installation and ongoing 24/7 management – with a rapid response 'break/fix' service. LMG also has responsibility for the integrity of Gatwick's connectivity management database – enabling full visibility of the status of all network nodes across the entire estate – helping to monitor and resolve issues as effectively and efficiently as possible.

LMG's ability to implement a converged, multi-technology deployment service – underpinned by a pool of cross-trained, highly experienced technicians, and online reporting tools – means Gatwick can benefit from more proactive management of its technology upgrade programme.

“There's a widespread appetite for change within the Gatwick community,” adds Rodel. “LMG's converged approach is a very attractive proposition – one that would not only benefit Gatwick, but the whole airport community. It's clear they have the ability to support all of the technologies and disciplines that we require during the transformation of Gatwick Airport. The appointment of LMG is seen as a positive move by the whole team.”

The benefits of converged delivery

The efficiency gains of working with a single point of contact to deliver multiple building services were immediately clear. As Rodel highlights: “Working with LMG, we streamlined the operation almost overnight. Not only is there only one person to deal with, I now have an overview of everything I need to know through a single management interface.”

Day-to-day operations are less complex to monitor and control. LMG's procurement system simplified the process of getting quotations and making requests. And of course, a streamlined delivery team minimises health and safety risks.

Decisions are taken locally – by LMG's multi-skilled technicians and project managers – rather than constantly having to go through 'head office'. This on-site expertise means work can be concluded in a more 'agile' and efficient manner.

And these efficiencies also reduce management costs, with a 20% reduction compared to using multiple specialist sub-contractors. Additionally, fixed rate prices, agreed at the outset, means there is total transparency – no nasty surprises when requesting variations or additional works.

“What we've established here runs incredibly smoothly. Although the volume of work means speed is essential – we cannot compromise on quality. LMG delivers an extremely consistent service, that's also highly flexible,” concludes Rodel. “This is exactly what we need, and we're working on deploying additional reporting tools that will give us further improvements in efficiency. It's been a massively successful and productive relationship.”

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