

Case study

Societe Generale: enabling a seamless transition

280,000ft²

Office space over 11 floors

3,200

Staff and visitors

40,000+

Cat6a user outlets

20,000+

Fibre backbone links

239x

Cisco WiFi APs

30,000

Equipment patches made

75x

Universal access points

3x

Mobile network operators
with capacity for a fourth

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Andrew Sharp

ICT Project Director, Societe Generale



**SOCIETE
GENERALE**

Societe Generale was established in the UK in 1871 as its first international office outside of France.

In 2019, the Group's London-based teams began the move to their new premises at One Bank Street, in Canary Wharf. The state-of-the-art building will house UK corporate and investment banking, securities services, asset management and private banking activities.

As a leading European financial services group, it was essential that Societe Generale's transition to a new location was handled in a streamlined and efficient manner – to guarantee that key business functions remained fully operational.

The challenge

For Societe Generale, there were numerous challenges to ensure its move to One Bank Street was as seamless as possible. Establishing the ICT infrastructure, associated connectivity, WiFi access point installation, and providing day one support for staff and equipment to name but a few.

But perhaps the greatest difficulty lay in the delivery of a high quality indoor mobile signal that accommodated multiple UK mobile network operators (MNOs).

A reliable, premium multi-operator signal service from UK MNOs – EE, Vodafone and O2 at launch, with Three UK to follow at a later date – was essential if the group's new mobile-centric tech strategy is to be successful.

“When moving to a new building, the ICT infrastructure fitout is a huge challenge on its own,” explains Andrew Sharp, ICT Project Director at Societe Generale. “But, from a mobile signal perspective, we needed to ensure seamless 4G service across all networks – with 5G future proofing – for the thousands of employees and customers that come through our offices at One Bank Street each day. Otherwise the connected experiences within the building would simply be a non-starter.”

Why LMG?

Contractually guaranteeing service from the UK MNO's is no easy task. But LMG's experience, expertise and industry contacts provided Societe Generale with the confidence that it could facilitate adding multiple MNO's to the indoor mobile network – a project first.

To achieve this ambitious goal, LMG worked in close partnership with StrattoOpencell, the UK's leading indoor mobile signal provider, who used their long standing relationships within the telecommunications sector to obtain the necessary commitment from the MNOs.

StrattoOpencell also provided a bundle of professional services that included – JOTS design, testing, system commissioning, and managing the installation of the MNO base stations and external connectivity. Societe Generale also benefit from a managed service relationship, assuring their network is well maintained and future ready.

To ensure that Societe Generale's 3,200 employees and customers have seamless 4 bar coverage for 4G services across multiple UK networks within this prestigious building, LMG deployed CommScope's innovative Era® C-RAN Antenna System.

In addition to supplying the building's DAS, LMG also installed CommScope's SYSTIMAX copper and fibre cabling infrastructure that underpins all of Societe Generale's smart building and ICT technology.

“By deploying CommScope's Era® C-RAN antenna system, Societe Generale gives visitors and staff a first-class in-building mobile experience. This, coupled with a high-performance cabling infrastructure, means that One Bank Street will benefit from connectivity that can match the pace of their user's bandwidth demands. Societe Generale's focus upon workplace innovation has combined with expert implementation by LMG, to produce a building that sets an example of what can be achieved.” Lewis White, Managing Director UK and Ireland Enterprise, CommScope

The benefits of this tripartite relationship were clear. LMG, in collaboration with StrattoOpencell and CommScope, put in place the foundation upon which the numerous connected services within One Bank Street now thrive.

Indeed, as well as provisioning the best indoor mobile signal service, LMG technicians connected all wired devices (over 30,000 connections), and installed the Cisco WiFi access points.

This means that LMG was responsible for delivering every element of connectivity – both wired and wireless – within this impressive building.

“Societe Generale needed a reliable, robust backbone of connectivity to power a new working culture within our organisation,” adds Andrew Sharp. “These services are business critical, so naturally there was some concern surrounding the project's delivery. LMG's reputation as a trusted partner within the industry was a huge part of putting senior stakeholders within the Group at ease. And the results are positive proof that their faith was more than justified.”



“Working with LMG has been fantastic. They know how to work with a specialist mobile network service provider and do so early in the scoping process. Societe Generale need a flexible yet seamlessly connected workplace. Mobile connectivity as a managed service is a perfect fit. We also facilitated a collaborative commercial model that worked for all parties.”

Tim Colby Head of Strategic Deployments, StrattoOpencell

A cultural shift

Far from being mere technological window-dressing, this connected framework is allowing Societe Generale to change its working methods in a profound way.

The company is ready for a 'bring-your-own-device' policy. And to assist with the transition towards the state-of-the-art functionality enabled by the new building, a downloadable app has been made available to optimise the user experience inside One Bank Street – providing a wide range of innovative services.

The app allows employees and visitors to view an interactive map of the building, book meeting rooms, collaboration and hot-desk spaces; as well as keep up-to-date on Societe Generale's latest news, beat queues for dining, order catering and much more.

Additionally, touch-screen kiosks located on each floor assist with wayfinding, or even allow users to locate colleagues in order to ensure close collaboration on a specific task.

And once inside the meeting rooms, AV equipment for videoconferencing and wireless sharing ensures those working remotely do not miss a beat.

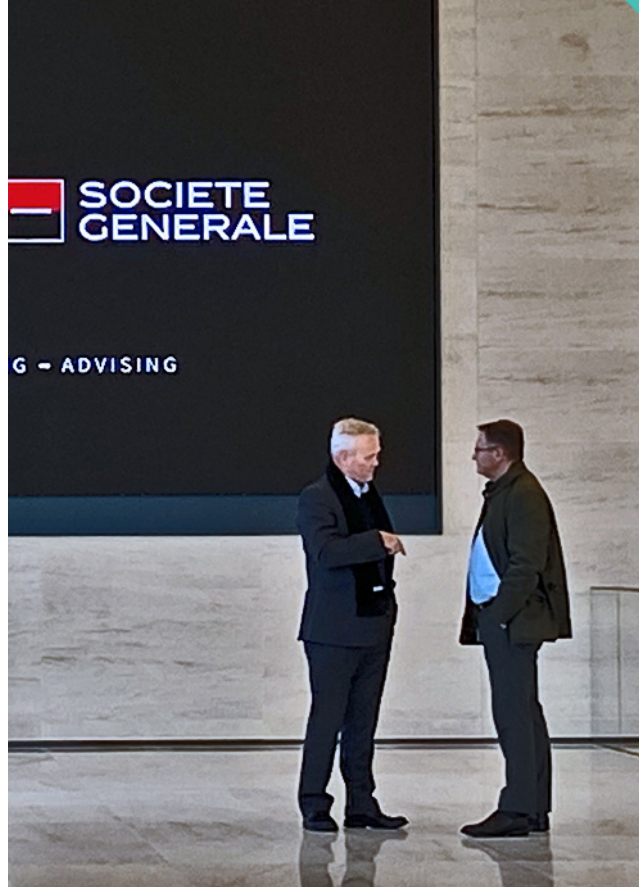
"None of this would be possible without the connectivity platform LMG provided" states Andrew Sharp. "Employees within the financial services industry have to react rapidly and decisively to an ever-changing landscape. There was some scepticism at first as to whether connected services and remote working would be fit for purpose in this environment. But the connectivity works so seamlessly that we've been able to free up the space associated with 300 desks due to the ease of working remotely."

This is a remarkable cultural shift for Societe Generale. There's a huge amount of data moving around the company at any given moment – traders connected to markets and clients to give just one example. Only an extremely resilient service could persuade staff to shift to a more virtual, rather than just physically, connected working model.

These results were achieved without negatively impacting the working environment. Great care was taken by LMG to ensure any antenna locations and WiFi access points did not interfere with the striking architecture of the new building.

One Bank Street now represents exactly what Societe Generale required – fully digitised, connected experiences for employees and visitors inside a beautiful work space. And LMG has provided the connectivity platform that has enabled this seamless transition.

"Having worked closely with the LMG delivery team over the past 18 months, I am very satisfied with their ability to work together, both as individuals and as part of the wider project team," concludes Andrew Sharp. "The migration has been about more than simply relocating to a new building, it's about resetting the way Societe Generale works as a whole. The completed installation has more than met our expectations and I believe we have the infrastructure in place that is capable of supporting the building throughout its entire lifecycle – regardless of our future technology choices."



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