

# A solution for remote work in just two weeks

Intelligent IT architecture and public cloud capacities help consumer goods company through the Corona pandemic



**“What started out as a quick solution for remote working in the Corona phase turned out to be a future-oriented setup for the new normal.”**

Varun Dilip Tare, T-Systems

Flexibility for a changing market environment is one of the promises of modern IT landscapes. So far, many companies have pursued business flexibility in the direction of cyclical changes in demand behavior or the establishment of new business models. In the first quarter of 2020, it was the global Corona pandemic that demanded a rapid response from companies in all industries, to ensure business continuity. As a result of the lockdown, the U.S. experienced its worst economic downturn in almost 150 years in the second quarter of 2020; other Central and South American countries are similarly affected. A majority of companies has lowered their earnings forecasts significantly. The new general conditions also pose huge challenges for the consumer goods industry – not only because of declining sales, but also to ensure the ability of its employees to work.

## At a glance

- Short-term government regulation for the closure of workplaces
- Lack of capacity for remote work at a consumer goods manufacturer
- Interim solution with routing to the EU data center
- Development of a future-oriented solution for the American market within two weeks

# Reference in detail

## The challenge

Companies from almost all industries were particularly challenged by the Corona pandemic. On the one hand, sales collapsed; on the other hand, standard processes and strategic projects had to be maintained to ensure business continuity. The complexity of this challenge increased even more because authorities in many countries, particularly the United States, required companies to close production sites and workplaces within just a few days. For an international consumer goods company, this had a major impact on its entire American business. Capacity for working from home was theoretically available, because the office applications were delivered in a scalable infrastructure from a regional cloud data center in the U.S., but the connectivity capacity required for the significantly increased concurrent access to the services was not sufficient – and the connectivity provider could not fix this in the short term. This would have been a severe blow to the productivity of the consumer goods company in the American region.

## The solution

As the operator of the cloud back-end, T-Systems developed a short-term solution to ensure business continuity for the consumer goods manufacturer. The basis for this was the global setup of the data center infrastructures, including the delivery of applications. Another important component of this solution was the customer's decision to introduce a bring-your-own-device concept in the past. This meant that all employees were able to access their digital workplaces – through their own devices or those provided by the company. In the first step, the access points of the American employees were redirected to the company's European data center, run by T-Systems. Sufficient capacity for this was available in the wide area network. The employees remained able to work – albeit with a reduction in the user experience due to the longer latencies. Meanwhile, T-Systems worked with the network provider to develop a new solution for remote working for American employees. The solution is based on an architecture developed by T-Systems. Because it is based on public cloud services, it could be set up and commissioned within a few days. The solution comprises cloud-based networking appliances, which facilitate the end user connections. This implementation was done together with customer's network service provider. After just two weeks, the employees' access could be routed again to the U.S. data center. The user experience returned to the usual high level.

## Customer benefits

With the provision of the applications from a redundant cloud back-end and the possibility of accessing the services on personal devices, the consumer goods company was already well positioned to operate its business in an agile manner. The existing setup enabled the company to work without interruption by redirecting to the European domain. With the help of public cloud services, a new solution for the connectivity bottleneck in the U.S. was established within a short time. The company was thus able to prove that dynamic ICT services also can handle extreme business situations.

The dismantling of the new solution is not even being considered, by the way. The Corona pandemic served as a catalyst for the capacity expansion. The company will continue to enable its U.S.-based employees to work independently of location, time, and device. In doing so, the company has created the basis for "new work" in the "new normal" and is thus able to react to changing market conditions in the future in an agile manner.

Additional advantages:

- Independence from market developments
- High security
- Significantly higher capacity
- Basis for further remote use of services

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