

Asahi Glass Co., Ltd.

More reliable global service through enhanced collaboration and security



Service: Enterprise Cloud
Arcstar Universal One



Mr. Minehiro Akasaki
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Asahi Glass Co., Ltd.

“We achieved the right infrastructure to become a global blue-chip company with high profits and high growth”



Customer profile

Name: Asahi Glass Co., Ltd.

Revenue: JPY 1,326.3 billion (as of December 2015)

Business: One of the world's leading glass makers, with business operations centering on glass for construction, display panels and automobiles. Also expanding into electronics and chemicals.

URL: www.agc.com

- Challenges**
 - Insufficient collaboration among offices worldwide
 - Inconsistency in security levels at global offices
- Solution**
 - Integrate email & authentication platforms in a data center in Japan
 - Achieve secure connection via integrated Internet gateway
- Benefits**
 - Faster communication between offices in all countries
 - Centralized virus scanning and incident management

Challenges

Integrating independently implemented platforms

The Asahi Glass Company (AGC) was established in 1907 and has become one of the world's leading glass manufacturers for construction and automobiles and also provides glass panels for LCDs, components for electronics, and products such as fluorine for the chemical industry.

The company is striving for continuous growth under its new AGC Plus management policy. It aims to benefit all stakeholders by providing greater safety, security and comfort for society; by creating new value and functions for customers and business partners that build mutual trust; by enhancing job satisfaction among employees; and by increasing the Groups' corporate value for investors.

While many companies are recently setting global business expansion as an objective, AGC has been actively expanding in overseas markets for over 50 years. However, its approach to expansion has changed dramatically over the years. In the past, AGC manufactured products locally because heavy glass products were unsuitable for export. This resulted in overseas affiliates becoming strongly independent. “But improvements in logistics now require greater collaboration between affiliates in all countries to enable sharing of production and product stock to meet demand,” explained Mr. Minehiro Akasaki of AGC. Therefore, AGC launched the Global Communication Enhancement Project (GCEP) to create a system that would enhance communication between bases all over the world. For example, it aimed to fully integrate independently implemented email platforms in Asian countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, China, Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan. “To integrate authentication platforms, our global business operations had to raise minimum security standards as well,” said Mr. Akasaki.



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Solution

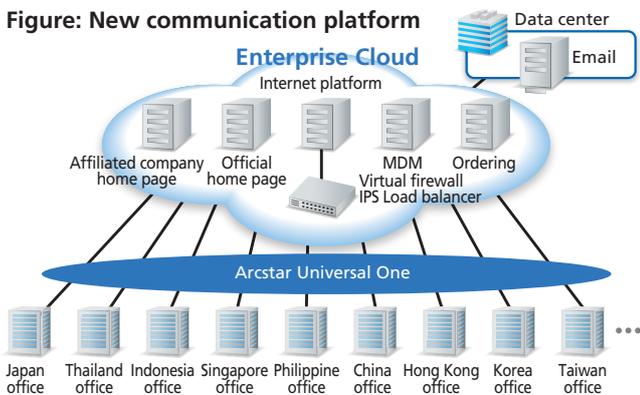
Entrusting important equipment to a reliable partner

AGC created its new global communication platform with support from NTT Communications (NTT Com). First, it integrated email and authentication platforms in a domestic data center. Then it connected the email platform with global bases through Enterprise Cloud's Internet gateway and included functions such as firewalls, IPS and load balancing for web access.

The company chose NTT Com as its partner because of its superb track record and superior proposal, which included greater data center robustness, higher operation monitoring quality, and higher reliability in handling important network equipment. AGC was already using NTT Com's Arcstar Universal One for its global network and Enterprise Cloud as its operation platform for the front-end web server of its official websites and OMS.

"In our longstanding relationship with NTT Com, they have always been a dependable partner. The integration and operation of our global infrastructure would require difficult tasks such as the handling of local carriers in each region. With its bases in every region, NTT Com can respond with attentive care on a global scale. Whenever we need help, they can provide it right away.

Figure: New communication platform



The email platform is integrated in a data center. Enterprise Cloud provides a communication portal for comprehensive access between Japan and Asian offices.

That's what I call reassuring," explained Mr. Akasaki. NTT Com's service also offered an edge in facilitating the connection between closed networks and the Internet.

Benefits

Enhanced business continuity and nonstop IT improvement

By following through with its project, AGC dramatically improved its communication speed in Japan and throughout Asia. "Our unified address book covers the entire Asian region, allowing us to find key employees in Asia, even if we don't know them personally, by inputting the country and division," said Mr. Akasaki. Having the same email domain throughout Asia makes communication smoother because the address does not change with job title.

Infrastructure costs and operational workloads were also slashed by relieving each office of its email and authentication servers. More important, the main objective of the project to increase global security was achieved through central virus checking and incident management in Japan. "When a vulnerability issue arose in the SSL, for example, we reduced the risk by simultaneously changing every user's browser settings from the central management console," said Mr. Akasaki.

To optimize global business operations, AGC is committed to continuously improving its IT environment through such measures as shifting business application systems currently implemented on-premises to the cloud. For example, MDM tools on Enterprise Cloud allow AGC employees to seamlessly use the same smart devices at home and abroad.

From the business continuity standpoint, various measures are planned, including the use of Enterprise Cloud to secure redundancy in the currently centralized communication platform and Internet gateway. "We look forward to further support from NTT Com, with its versatile services and high reliability, toward the fulfillment of our project goals," Mr. Akasaki emphasized.