

Bharti-Airtel Ltd. – Providing Emergency Capacity Rapid Solutions to Reduce Customer Outages



Customer Profile

Bharti-Airtel is one of Asia's leading integrated telecom services providers with operations across the globe. Voted India's most innovative company by the Wall Street Journal, Bharti-Airtel offers long distance voice, International leased circuit, wireless and Internet services to over 96 million end-user customers under the Airtel brand.

Airtel's high-speed fiber optic network currently spans over 62,000 miles in 95 cities across India and over 50,000 miles of undersea capacity.

"In both instances, Level 3 quickly set up a project team that put a coordinated and well-managed process into place. They were not only able to deliver the services we needed, but also did so in record time."

-Ajay Chitkara – COO Global Data Business

Overview

CHALLENGE

Bharti-Airtel Ltd. needed emergency network capacity on two occasions due to fiber cuts on a major transoceanic submarine cable in the Mediterranean, disabling traffic delivery to Europe. Since subsea cable systems typically take weeks to repair, Bharti-Airtel had to identify alternative routing quickly via its own backbone in order to avoid service interruptions for its customers.

SOLUTION

Level 3 dedicated a team to work directly with carriers impacted by the outage. In less than 24 hours, Level 3 turned up network capacity that enabled Airtel to reroute traffic to the west across the Pacific and the United States to reach Europe.

BENEFITS

Ready-access to Level 3 intra U.S. and U.S.-Europe network capacity enabled Airtel to restore services quickly, limiting the impact of the outage to hours versus days. The quick turn around on service availability minimized potentially significant costs from lost revenue due to service penalties and customer defection that often result from extended service interruptions.

Reducing Customer Outages

In January and December of 2008, Bharti-Airtel was one of numerous carriers impacted by the cable cuts that caused much of India to run on severely constrained capacity. Subsea cable outages can be very damaging to carriers, as well as end-user customers, due to the often extended timeframes to repair.

Level 3 understands the importance of network quality, scalability and speed of delivery. In response to these major transoceanic cable cuts, Level 3 quickly mobilized response teams to deploy additional network capacity and connect with customers to provision alternative routing solutions.

To minimize the impact to their network and end-user customers, Airtel rerouted its traffic as quickly as possible via its Pacific route. Level 3 was the only carrier that provided an alternative network solution to Airtel within hours without imposing additional commercial terms for the new service deployment.

Rapid Speed of Deployment

With the first instance in January 2008, Level 3 provided trans-U.S. transport capacity and several ports of west-coast Internet Protocol (IP) capacity in less than 18 hours. During the second cable outage in December 2008, Level 3 delivered multiple ports of west-coast IP capacity in less than 12 hours. On both occasions, the impact of the cable system outage was significantly minimized by Level 3's speed of delivery. By virtue of this rapid deployment, the net impact of the outages on Airtel's business was reduced significantly, by enabling Airtel to maintain nearly 100 percent of their services during this time.

The Deployment Process

In response to both outages, Level 3 deployed an alternative route quickly to ensure that Airtel's business remained operational. Level 3 identified a project team that managed the process in frequent intervals, meeting every two hours to determine progress and identify necessary resources. This real-time effort was important to ensuring that Airtel's needs were met in a balanced, flexible and timely manner.