

**HCE deployed an SD-WAN for Alectra, providing always-on network connectivity. The new SD-WAN network has replaced four separate, legacy systems, which has enabled Alectra System Control to have instant awareness of the health of its mission critical distribution system.**

Alectra, a contemporary energy services company in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), delivers energy to over a million businesses and consumers across the region. This progressive company is designed to thrive. At its core is an ethos that is founded upon being a customer-centric, innovative, energy services company.

Built on an expansive corporate social responsibility portfolio and driven by innovative pilot projects, Alectra is poised to lead the way in deploying modern technologies for energy delivery and conservation.

## **The Challenge**

To deliver on its vision, Alectra needs a solid technological foundation on which to run its business. Alectra runs a 24x7 operation, providing mission critical energy distribution services. Alectra System Control requires a robust and reliable field area network to monitor the health of the 70 electrical substations supplying energy to Alectra's customers in Peel Region. The legacy copper infrastructure in service was becoming increasingly unreliable and proving too costly for Alectra; costs were outstripping value and Alectra realized they needed to build a new network. The turning point came when the field area network became an unwieldy burden after Alectra consolidated services with the family of companies that make up the business.

Alectra turned to HCE looking for a way to replace this costly field area network and design and deploy a low-latency, broadband service, connecting all of Alectra's sites.

## **The Solution**

HCE, a leading-edge telecommunications company, designed a state-of-the-art network for Alectra, replacing legacy infrastructure with a Software Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN), made up of a combination of DSL and wireless LTE technology.

HCE deployed an SD-WAN, providing always-on network connectivity. The new network enabled Alectra to consolidate operations, and now only need two network operations centres. The new system replaces four individual, disparate legacy systems, enabling System Control to contact any truck, deployed throughout Alectra's service territory.

## **Migration to SDWAN**

One of the challenges in successful SD-WAN deployment is a lack of standardization in the network. Alectra was characteristic of most customers, so to deploy the SD WAN effectively, HCE needed to help Alectra standardize and normalize their IP infrastructure.

This is just the beginning. Now that Alectra has successfully moved to an SD-WAN network, it is

building a roadmap to converge other applications onto the SD-WAN, securely connecting users to applications without compromising application performance.

## Outcomes

The SD-WAN simplifies operations by enabling centralized provisioning and management. Multiple layers of security protect against Internet and branch cyber threats.

The SD-WAN architecture has been pivotal to the creation of a resilient network on which Alectra can rely. The system is constantly sending data so there is zero loss, providing instantaneous, real-time connectivity.

The SD-WAN provides Alectra with the advantage of establishing the foundation for digital enablement. With an SD-WAN at its core, Alectra is poised to drive innovation in how it conducts its operations and drive innovation in how it serves its customers.

## Benefits

Thanks to the lower costs attributed to running the SD-WAN network, Alectra is garnering close to 40% in operational savings. The business has been able to return the savings into investing in new ways of improving services for clients.

The new network offers more granularity of data and enhanced analytics for reporting that was not possible with the legacy network. Thanks to the SD-WAN, System Control can now monitor network performance using enhanced performance metrics thanks to deeper granularity of data. Now, System Control can respond to and make informed decisions, making it possible to rapidly respond in real time to service interruptions.

## Alectra Quote

*"Thanks to HCE, we have been able to simplify day to day monitoring and operations. The SD-WAN has been pivotal in transforming our business operations, giving us greater and more timely data on which to make decisions. HCE provided us with a team of professionals who were able to deftly move us from a legacy network to an SD-WAN with minimal disruption to our business and delivered maximum impact. Thanks to HCE we are able to not only reimagine how we deliver services, but now we can make it possible."*

## HCE Input

Jeff Cowan, President and CEO of HCE Networks explains that the SD-WAN was the ideal solution for Alectra. The SD-WAN manages traffic in real-time, across multiple Internet connections, optimizing Internet performance. The SD-WAN simplifies operations with centralized management and policy control, exactly what Alectra needed to transform its business and ready it for a digital economy.

## About HCE

HCE prides itself on being a nimble telecommunications company that moves quickly in response to client needs. Thanks to a team of experienced and dedicated professionals, HCE is able to swiftly deliver on particularly complex demands, providing innovative solutions to highly intricate network challenges. It draws on deep network experience to provide exceptional service to its local community, to help create a healthy, safe and vibrant society. Since 2015, HCE has deployed a 10-gigabit fibre network that serves city facilities, businesses, universities and hospitals.

Playing to its strengths. HCE has developed a solid understanding of the needs of the Municipal, University, School, and Hospital (MUSH) sectors. It counts among its customers; Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, City of Hamilton, The Region of Halton and the Hamilton Police Service), The Weather Network and the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario

## **About Alectra**

Alectra is changing the face of energy in Ontario and shaping the future as we know it. Alectra provides safe, reliable and innovative energy solutions to homes and businesses across the Greater Golden Horseshoe area in Ontario, Canada.

Alectra serves over one million customers through its electrical distribution service, but it is more than just a local distribution company. Alectra has grown to become an energy ally, satisfying the growing need of consumers to have more choices when it comes to service providers. With innovative pilot projects, an expansive corporate social responsibility portfolio and a strong competitive market division - Alectra is equipped to help consumers discover the possibilities of energy conservation and new technologies.

Alectra Utilities is the culmination of five progressive, low-cost and innovative electricity distributors that came together for a common goal - to be a single trusted ally in the rapidly changing world of energy. With a respected history in electrical distribution, Alectra is steeped in pioneering firsts, ground-breaking achievements and memorable milestones that will help guide the industry in the future