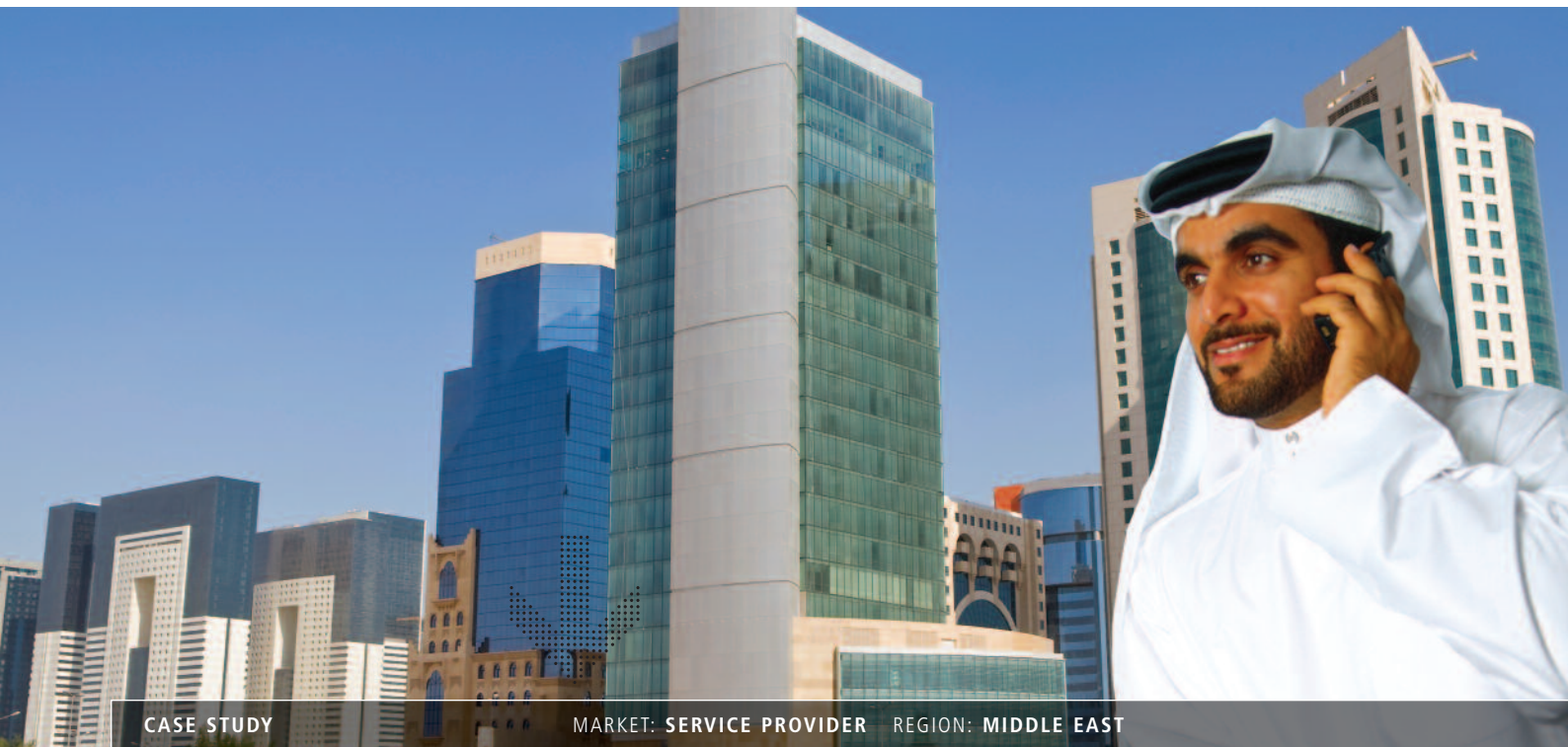


Vodafone Qatar transforms the mobile landscape with an end-to-end multi-standard Managed Services partnership with Alcatel-Lucent

Turnkey solution enables Vodafone to quickly and efficiently take advantage of an important opportunity to enter the mobile market with competitive next-generation services



CASE STUDY

MARKET: SERVICE PROVIDER REGION: MIDDLE EAST



Vodafone Qatar is part of the world's leading international mobile communications group, the Vodafone Group. Vodafone currently has over 300 million customers worldwide and equity interests in 31 countries across five continents. Vodafone Qatar switched on its mobile network in March 2009 to become the second public mobile operator in the State of Qatar. To realize its forward looking vision "To be the most admired brand in Qatar," the company turned to Alcatel-Lucent for a fully outsourced, end-to-end managed services solution for a brand new 2G/3G mobile network.

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BASSAM AL-IBRAHIM, TECHNOLOGY VENDOR MANAGER, VODAFONE QATAR

CHALLENGES

- Quickly take advantage of a Greenfield opportunity to become the second mobile provider in Qatar
- Rapidly build and deploy a new next-generation mobile network in a challenging desert environment
- Ensure state of the art network and operations support with a minimal technology support organization on the ground (in Qatar)

SOLUTIONS

- Complete end-to-end Build-Operate-Manage Mobility solution including radio, core, transmission, applications as well as services for deployment and management.
- True Managed Services partnership with comprehensive network integration, maintenance and operations support provided by Alcatel-Lucent
- Network planning and development retained by Vodafone Qatar

BENEFITS

- Accelerate time to revenue through an aggressive deployment schedule.
- Alcatel-Lucent program management, technology, and managed services expertise allows Vodafone to focus on it’s core business — meeting customer needs
- Mitigate business risk utilizing Alcatel-Lucent’s local/regional/global technical and operations professionals and support infrastructure
- Aggressive Service Level Agreements (SLA’s) with the ability to deliver Key Performance Indicators (KPI) using state-of-the art tools to track results, and build unprecedented accountability
- Cost optimized platform for the delivery of new customer services

The challenges

On June 28, 2008 Vodafone Qatar was granted the second public mobile networks and services license in the State of Qatar. This was a seminal moment that signalled the end of a telecommunications monopoly enjoyed by incumbent provider, Qatar Telecom (Qtel). With the launch of Vodafone in Qatar, with a population of roughly 1.2 million, would experience for the first time a serious alternative for their mobile communication needs.

The decision to grant Vodafone an operator’s license was part of a long-term, far reaching national strategy called Vision 2030. The overriding goal of the national vision is to sustain the country’s high standard of living through human development, social development, economic development, and environmental development. Vodafone Qatar was an incremental yet important step in the realization of this multifaceted strategy to diversify the economy of Qatar.

The significance of this national vision inspired Vodafone Qatar to approach the Greenfield telecommunications opportunity with a special purpose: “Make a world of difference for all the People in Qatar.” To deliver on this promise — and become the most admired brand in Qatar — required an advanced mobile telecommunications network capable of delivering state-of-the-art services. Moreover, Vodafone Qatar made the important strategic decision to use a Managed Services solution to rapidly deploy a brand new mobile network with the goal of achieving immediate operational efficiencies and service excellence.

Specifications for the end-to-end solution included Core, Intelligent Network (IN), transmission, 2G and 3G Radio Access Network (RAN), in addition to I&C, training, engineering, site acquisition, civil works and managed services. The scope of this outsourced business model was completely new to Vodafone Group. “Vodafone Qatar is actually trying to set a new standard for the Vodafone Group,” confirms Bassam Al-Ibrahim, Technology Vendor Manager, Vodafone Qatar.

Why Alcatel-Lucent?

Above all, Vodafone Qatar required a true technology and management partner that they could trust. “Partnership is an essential part of our technology strategy,” says Al-Ibrahim. “It’s not just our customers’ worlds which are increasingly connected. Ours is too.”

Vodafone Qatar set clear goals and criteria for choosing a Managed Service partner. Considerations included:

- Do we both have a compelling benefit from participating?
- Do we understand what is driving each company?
- Is there a personal rapport between our people?
- Can we each respond quickly to changing requirements?
- Does this feel like one team?

Alcatel-Lucent has amassed extensive experience helping major carriers around the world achieve technological and operational excellence through a Managed Services solution. This solution has a proven track record for enabling service providers to rapidly achieve measurable OPEX savings, cost effectively deploy next-generation technology and services, and improve the focus of the company — all with a very small contingent of in-house technical experts. Alcatel-Lucent accomplishes this by leveraging a vast global network of over 10,000 technicians, network engineers and consultants who use best implementation practices and a methodology that has been well honed from over 15 years experience in supporting over 100 Managed Service contracts worldwide.

In particular, Alcatel-Lucent had recently deployed Mobile Networks in several countries with geographically challenging rollout considerations. These included a turnkey expansion of a GSM Radio Access Network in Northern Pakistan, a turnkey deployment of over 1,000 sites for a GSM network in Saudi Arabia, and a 1,335 site deployment for a GSM/GPRS network in Thailand. The success of these and other relevant deployments; and the scope of Alcatel-Lucent’s global footprint gave Vodafone confidence that Alcatel-Lucent could successfully and efficiently drive a multi-phased build, operate and maintain mobile network strategy in Qatar.

Al-Ibrahim acknowledges: “Alcatel-Lucent was the perfect fit, the perfect price, with the experience we needed: a company Vodafone trusted and valued.”

The solutions

Providers around the world are looking at outsourcing the management of their existing network operations as a way to contain costs. Alcatel-Lucent Managed Services

solutions help service providers move efficiently from a network-centric to a service-centric business model to better meet end customer needs for innovative multimedia applications and services. What distinguishes the Vodafone Qatar deployment is the decision to build a new mobile network from the ground-up — and simultaneously adopt a Managed Services business model for the operation and maintenance of this new network.

To meet this dual requirement, Alcatel-Lucent offers a comprehensive Build-Operate-Manage (B-O-M) Mobility solution. The B-O-M solution is designed specifically for carrier customers like Vodafone Qatar that need to cost effectively roll-out, operate, and manage a brand new next-generation mobility network. This comprehensive Alcatel-Lucent solution consists of three phases:

- Build (design, planning, engineering, installation, integration, optimization, validation, test and turn-up)
- Operate & Manage (monitor, fault management, field maintenance, repair, performance & configuration management capacity management)

The Alcatel-Lucent end-to-end managed solution for Vodafone Qatar consisted of:

- Rollout processes built around five core activities: Radio Network Engineering, site negotiation, civil works, telecommunications installation, and overall project management
- All 2G/3G Radio equipment for a total of 380 cell sites
- Core equipment for a next generation network (NGN) and next-generation Home Location Register (ngHLR) solution
- Civil works for radio sites on a turnkey basis
- Radio Network Planning (RNP), Radio Network Operations (RNO) and full integration services
- 5-year maintenance contract for all radio equipment
- Establish, Operate and Maintain (EOM) offer based on Alcatel-Lucent’s Global Network Operations Center (GNOC) for 5 years
- End-to-end monitoring (OSS) solution
- Comprehensive services including installation, commissioning, and acceptance

Alcatel-Lucent completed a network design based on Key Performance Indicators established by Vodafone Qatar and Alcatel-Lucent’s experience with turnkey deployments of a similar scale. Alcatel-Lucent handled all site negotiations leading to Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) for rental of property to Vodafone Qatar for equipment installation. In addition to meeting an aggressive deployment schedule, the Vodafone Qatar

solution is distinguished by the fact that it is the only project worldwide that features an A to Z implementation of Alcatel-Lucent equipment. Also, Vodafone Qatar is one of the first countries in the world to have deployed a Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) solution on the 900 MHz spectrum. As well, all 24/7 Alarm Surveillance and Fault and Performance Management activities are performed by Alcatel-Lucent's GNOC in Poland. The GNOC provides services to various operators around the world and is central to Alcatel-Lucent's Managed Services solution and strategy for enabling carriers to realize substantial CAPEX and OPEX savings. The GNOC also directs and coordinates Vodafone's in-country Field Maintenance activities that are operated from the Field Operations Center in Doha.

"The thing that I like most about Alcatel-Lucent is the way they do Managed Services...it is very well done. They have a common understanding...there is a lot of transparency, so there's no issues that we have to overcome. What we have is a cost-effective yet solid Managed Services environment based on operational excellence and quality of service," says Al-Ibrahim.

The Alcatel-Lucent value add

A project of this magnitude inevitably faces considerable challenges on several fronts: integration, interfacing, deploying and set-up, securing site licenses and many others. Flexibility, trust, and the ability to deploy the right expertise at precisely the right time are all key success factors. This is one of the chief ways that Alcatel-Lucent was able to create significant extra value. "We were obtaining people from literally all over the world, whenever we needed them," confirms Al-Ibrahim. "So issues that we were facing were quickly being overcome because of the fact that Alcatel-Lucent Qatar was leveraging its expertise from an international perspective: so that made life much easier for us."

For example, Alcatel-Lucent immediately deployed Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from its China facility to resolve a system problem. "Imagine, these people who created the actual product are getting involved and helping you to customize it and resolve any issues. So I am not just talking to a third party that Alcatel-Lucent has trained.

I'm speaking to one of the guys who actually created this product. What more can you expect than that?"

Knowledge of the local market was also a significant value add. Alcatel-Lucent has extensive operations in the region to provide services throughout the Middle East and Africa. Knowledge of the local territory and market also enabled Alcatel-Lucent to provide expertise quickly while mitigating Vodafone's business risks.

Summary

Vodafone Qatar not only ensured it would get right technology and experience; it also got a Managed Services partner who was committed to ensuring it provided operational excellence and an unmatched end-user experience to the people of Qatar. "Their [Alcatel-Lucent] major concern is to make sure that the end customer is happy," says Al-Ibrahim "So it's not us that they're making happy, it is our end customers, which for us is the most important thing."

For Al-Ibrahim and Vodafone Qatar, the distinction between a vendor and a partner relationship is critically important. "A vendor is a company that you deal with on a contractual basis. They do a job and then they are out. That's not what we have with Alcatel-Lucent. A partner is somebody that you grow with, you develop with. Expertise and knowledge is mixed and it's handed over from one team to another...but it is also sharing the responsibilities and everything. That's the difference between a partner and a vendor."

The partnership between Vodafone Qatar and Alcatel-Lucent has given the people of Qatar the ability to choose between two operators for the first time in the history of the country. It is a partnership that is rich with promise and future potential. For the moment, with Alcatel-Lucent's help, Vodafone Qatar is helping the country realize its National Vision for a vibrant, diversified, and competitive economy.

For more information about Alcatel-Lucent Managed Services:

www.alcatel-lucent.com/services/managed_services.html