

# kgb Extends Global Growth and Innovation with Cost-efficient Network Support

## industry:

Service Provider

## country:

Global

## business challenge:

Maximize network uptime while controlling support costs and expanding global service offerings and delivery

## solution:

Comprehensive, fixed-cost network support

## services:

Support services: Uptime Powered by Cisco Services

## results:

- Minimized network outages and problems while speeding problem resolution amid substantial growth in global traffic
- Supported expansion of new service offerings, including new text answer service, Web-based answer site, and more than 100 local deal sites globally while holding the line on global network support costs
- Supported shift from higher- to lower-cost in-house support resources in Philippines network operations center
- Minimized customer rebates for network downtime and increased customer satisfaction

## Executive Summary

Providing a **broad range of wholesale and retail information services to more than 100 million consumers worldwide, kgb can ill afford the risk of network downtime.** By using Uptime Services from Dimension Data, the innovative information company **has been able to maintain nearly flawless network performance on a global basis** while increasing network traffic, **adding a number of new services, and holding the line on the cost of network support.**

## Company Overview

kgb is a privately held, New York-based company and the world's largest independent provider of directory assistance and enhanced information services. Along with providing call center support for leading companies in telecommunications, cable, utilities, government, and health care, the company has pioneered a broad range of enhanced information services for consumers such as movie listings, train schedules, price comparisons, and "ask us anything" services for mobile and landline phones, SMS, and the Internet.

The company's consumer brands include text answering services 542542 in the US, 118 118 in the UK, and 118 218 Le Numero in France, as well as kgbanswers.com on the Web, the people search site kgbpeople.com, and local deal sites within kgbdeals.com in more than 100 cities around the world. In 2010 kgb served more than a hundred million consumers globally.

## Business Challenge

Amid substantial global growth and change, kgb needed to ensure that its network foundation remained rock solid while minimizing any performance problems or downtime but also holding the line on the cost of network support.

"We've been adding significant new customers and growing with new products, but our support budget is fixed so we need to squeeze in as much support as we can," explains **network manager Vincent Andal.**

"We have also shifted some support resources from the US and Europe to our network operations center in the Philippines so we have a lot more responsibility for 24x7 support from there."

The company faced three network support challenges in particular:

- Determining the best and most cost-efficient approach to equipment support amid a fast-changing inventory of network devices
- Ensuring rapid response to any service or equipment problem, especially with increasingly complex services and substantial customer penalties for downtime or service degradation
- Obtaining high-level expert assistance to guarantee rapid resolution to any problem that is not immediately addressed by the first lines of support

## Solution Provided

Kgb had worked with Dimension Data since 2001 and developed a strong and trusted relationship based on a number of successful projects in network design, testing, implementation, and support.

As kgb looked to extend its network support to address its latest challenges, Dimension Data was an obvious choice given its deep knowledge of kgb's business and systems, its successful track record with kgb and other similar organizations, and its top tier support offerings and capabilities.

By choosing Dimension Data's Uptime Maintenance and Support offering, kgb received the precise resources, capabilities, and assurance it needed to successfully address its most important challenges. With Uptime, kgb gained access to:

- A best-in-class Service Level Agreement with firm commitment for rapid resolution of any network or device issue
- Leading technical experts with deep experience in every aspect of kgb's technology and network operations
- A single point of contact to help accelerate problem resolution, ensure constant communication, and take full ownership and responsibility for managing every service request
- A clear process for escalation to top tier experts in case the first line of support is unable to resolve any problem
- A fixed-price contract to ensure complete predictability in ongoing support costs regardless of unpredictable needs

## Value derived

With Dimension Data's Uptime solution, kgb was able to achieve its most important business and network support objectives, including:

- Minimizing network outages and problems while speeding time to resolution amid substantial growth in global traffic
- Supporting the expansion of new service offerings, including new text answer service, Web-based answer site, and more than 100 local deal sites globally while holding the line on global network support costs
- Supporting the shift from higher - to lower-cost in-house support resources in its network operations center in the Philippines

- Minimizing customer rebates for network downtime while increasing customer satisfaction

"Simply put, we can't live without it," says Vincent Anand:

"When we need to move quickly on support issues it's very important that we have multiple tiers of support. We do have a lot of skilled engineers within the company but it's critical that we have their higher tier of support with people who deal with these issues every day. Their broader experience gets us faster resolution, which translates into less rebates and happier customers."

Most important, kgb has a trusted support partner it knows will come through in every situation. As Anand explains:

"The relationship is great. They're pretty tolerant when I need something 'two hours ago' and will deliver at any time. They're very professional, they understand our needs, and they stretch out for us all the time. We had a serious issue between the U.S. and the Philippines recently with an overload of the connecting routers and they had new ones up and running in less than three days; usually it takes 45 days for that kind of order. That certainly got everyone's attention here, and it shows the kind of relationship we have."