Ongoing
Innovation

INPEX CORPORATION

Seamlessly connecting Japan and the Americas to implement IT governance at offices around the world

INPEX CORPORATION, Japan's largest oil and gas exploration and production company, recognized issues with its IT infrastructure and user support at offices in Europe and the Americas. In response, the company implemented a solution incorporating the "IIJ GIO US Service" cloud service, the "Net *de!* World" global Internet VPN service, and a multilingual end user support and help desk provided by the IIJ Group in the United States. With this, the company began enhancing the IT infrastructure and user support at its offices in Europe and the Americas.

Issues

- Offices in Europe and the Americas each procured their own individually-optimized infrastructure.
- As there were not any IT staff in these offices, local staff had to make inquires to the help desk at the head office, which was affecting operations due to the time difference.
- Exerting direct control over local vendors and building infrastructure in overseas locations such as Latin America was a burden, with the varied languages, cultures, and political situations there.

Results

- The IT environment at offices in Europe and the Americas was revised to implement IT governance from the head office in Japan.
- The project was managed in coordination with local vendors overseas, covering detailed requirements, and achieving total optimization of the IT infrastructure.
- A centralized multilingual help desk and user support was provided from the United States to resolve the time lag issue and arrange comprehensive assistance for office IT equipment in Europe and the Americas.

User Profile

INPEX CORPORATION

Head Office: Akasaka Biz Tower 5-3-1 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Established: April 3, 2006

Capital: JPY 290,809,835,000

INPEX CORPORATION is a worldwide oil and gas exploration and production company based in Tokyo, Japan, with more than 70 active projects across 27 countries. Since 1966, INPEX has steadily expanded its business in Japan and in other parts of the world, from its core business areas in Australia and Indonesia to the Middle East, the Caspian Sea region, the Gulf of Mexico and North and South America.

http://www.inpex.co.jp/

INPEX

Issues before implementation

Fragmented IT infrastructure at offices in Europe and the Americas was a bottleneck for global collaboration

INPEX develops its oil and natural gas operations in Japan and abroad, and its social mission is to supply energy in a stable and efficient manner. To this end, it established the "Medium- to long-term vision of inpex" laying out growth targets and key initiatives for achieving sustainable growth in the future. INPEX's Information Management & Technology Department has also formulated a global IT strategy, and is focusing its efforts on implementing it. INPEX's Rencheng Li said:

"Our Information Management & Technology Department has currently set three major goals: achieving an efficient work style though cutting-edge IT, promoting integrated collaboration throughout the group, and improving operations capability to boost our competitive advantage in the global market."

When implementing these measures, the department was confronted with the need to improve the IT environment at overseas offices and establish thorough IT governance. "In the past, each office in North America, Latin America, and Europe designed and built its own system individually, so there was a variety of configurations. That prevented us from implementing global IT governance." states INPEX's Hiroyuki Ishikawa.

Takafumi Ono, also of INPEX, explains further. "For example, our overseas offices in the Americas have no IT staff on hand, and rely on the Japan head office help desk for support, but

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because of the time difference the response was often delayed by half a day or more. Overseas offices were also unable to access head office systems such as human resources or accounting, and communication tools between offices was limited to email and phone, which led to inefficiency."

The deciding factor

The distinct sense of security provided by a Japanese vendor capable of reaching an understanding on the finer points

In November 2012, INPEX began evaluating network infrastructure for seamlessly connecting its head office with offices in North America, Latin America, and London. The aim of this was to bolster IT governance in offices in Europe and the Americas, and improve convenience for local staff. "The basic concept was to set up a data center catering to the American region, and connect it with the head office by broadband line. We would then integrate the systems for each office in North America and Latin America into this data center." says Mr. Ono.

However, countries in Latin America differ greatly in language, culture, and political situation, and building infrastructure while controlling local vendors was expected to be a significantly difficult task. In light of this, INPEX chose to partner with IIJ, which has a proven track record in global development.

"A Japanese vendor offering global IT services provides more peace of mind than an overseas vendor, as it enables us to communicate finer details in Japanese. IIJ is a veteran in assisting the overseas development of Japanese companies in Europe in particular, and we felt assured that their know-how and human resources would provide solid support for our global IT strategy." notes Mr. Li.

INPEX also placed high value on IIJ's ability to implement a variety of cloud-based rather than on-premise solutions. "While we had big plans for the building of this infrastructure, it was a learning process for us in many regards, and we wanted to keep our initial investment as low as possible. IIJ was

sympathetic to our requirements in this area." states Mr. Ishikawa. As a result, in February 2013 INPEX decided to implement a suite of global services provided by the IIJ Group, including the "Net *de!* World" global Internet VPN service, the "IIJ GIO US Service" and a multilingual end user support and help desk solution.
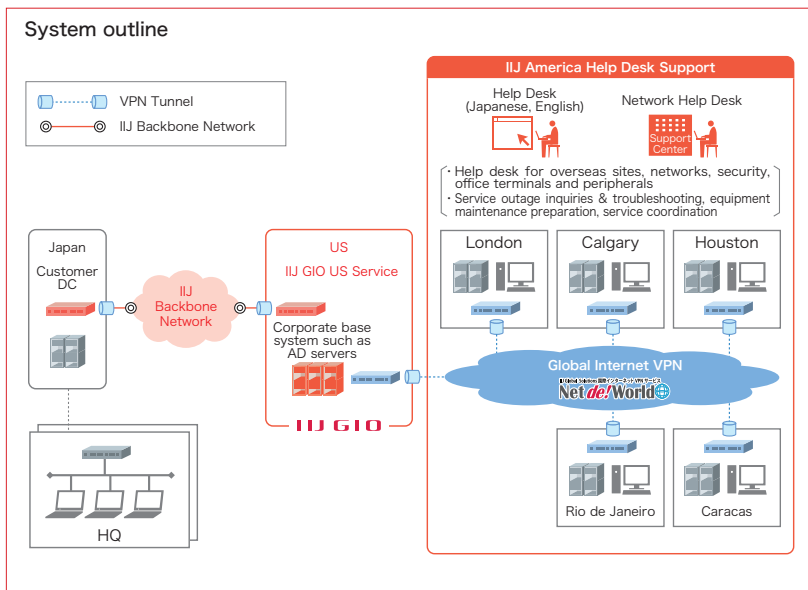
Results of implementation

Achieving integrated governance for IT infrastructure and a support system with immediacy

"As expected, the global services provided by the IIJ Group facilitated good collaboration with local vendors, and supported the building of infrastructure. Thanks to this, in December 2013 we achieved global IT governance and total optimization via a network that seamlessly connected our head office, North America, and Latin America. We are now prepared for the centralized rollout of strategic IT systems that support the efficient management of local business, including AD servers." says Mr. Ishikawa.

The IIJ solutions were also well-received by staff stationed at overseas offices. "I've been told that being able to use the head office system directly from overseas offices is a very welcome change." says Mr. Ono.

Based on these results, INPEX also plans to complete global IT infrastructure seamlessly connecting overseas offices in Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia by the end of fiscal 2014. "Our work is only just beginning. We'd like to proactively develop services for company-wide unified communication and knowledge sharing on this new infrastructure, such as Web conferencing, instant messaging, and internal social media. We hope that IIJ will continue to provide innovative proposals and solid support." says Mr. Li. IIJ is prepared to provide even greater support as INPEX's project enters its next phase.

System outline