

Customer Success Story: How Dubai Municipality Increased IT Agility by Breaking Down Network and Server Silos

Header image courtesy of Dubai Municipality



Objective

Dubai Municipality employs 11,000 employees across 34 departments and six sectors, including International Affairs & Partnership, Environment Health and Safety, Public Health Services and Planning and Engineering. Dubai Municipality is focused on creating an excellent city that enables success and the comfort of sustainable living. Dubai Municipality is regarded as one of the largest governmental institutions in terms of services rendered and projects executed, thus The Municipality is the leading driver of growth and evolution of the Emirate of Dubai.

Dubai Municipality is the first data center in the MENA region to be completely outfitted and operational via SDN Technology. Additionally, the datacenter is fully integrated and orchestrated with VMware and future-proofed. DM first began to modernize its datacenter approach when it became apparent that scaling with traditional tools would quickly become uneconomical. One of its first steps was to determine the true capacity of its networking. Additionally, the municipality wanted to eliminate core switch renewals, reduce migration costs and increase performance.



“Dubai Municipality selected Big Switch Networks for this project because the company offered the most innovative solution for our specific needs, and radically decreased our costs and offered network automation. Big Cloud Fabric provided us significant and ongoing advantages that we did not previously experience and would not have experienced with the other solutions we reviewed.”

- MR. AHMED KAJOOR
Head of IT Infrastructure

OBJECTIVE

- Become completely operational on SDN technology
- Obtain enhanced visibility and automation of vSphere server deployments
- Reduce costs

SOLUTION

- Core-and-Pod approach, comprised of three-rack pod design providing visibility and automation of vSphere
- The BCF controller integrated directly with vCenter to automate network application deployment on the physical SDN fabric
- Edge-core Open Networking Switches

RESULTS

- Reduced infrastructure size and enhanced performance resulting from core-and-pod approach. Increased network performance, speed and bandwidth, including:
 - 42X increase of switching speed
 - 16x increase in backbone capacity
 - Combined three physical data centers to a single logical cloud
 - Reduced migration costs by 90%

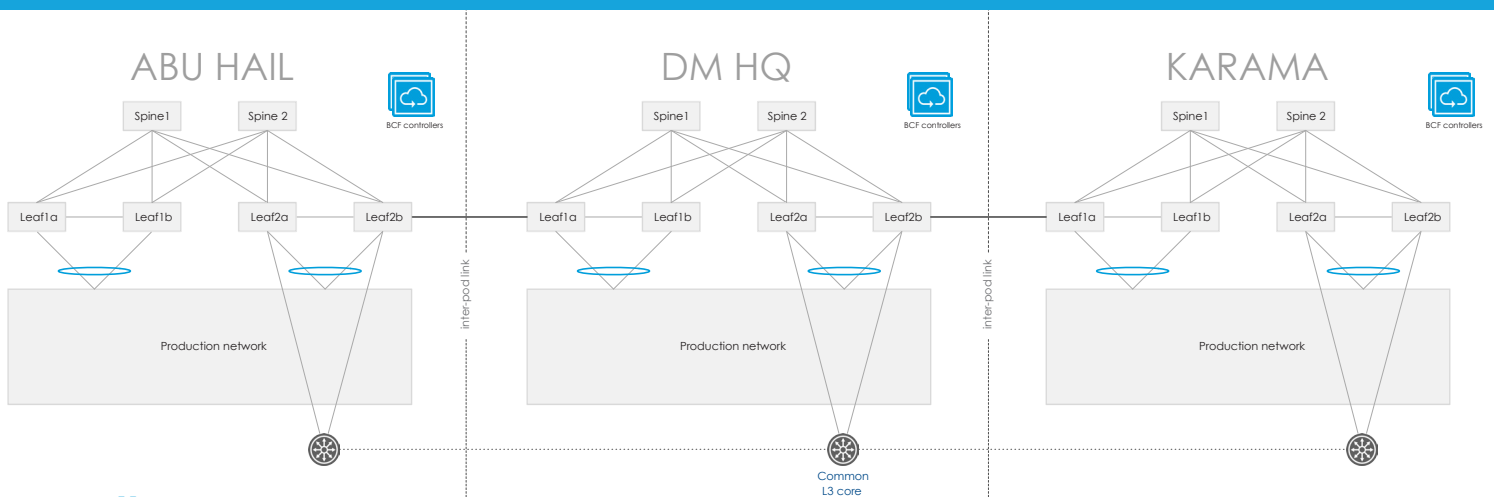
Solution

Dubai Municipality chose Big Switch Networks' Big Cloud Fabric to modernize its data center network. Dubai Municipality is the first data center in the MENA region to be completely outfitted and operational via open SDN technology coupled with white-box switches. Additionally, the datacenter is fully integrated and orchestrated for VMware and the environment is future-proofed for OpenStack.

Dubai Municipality's deployment leverages a "core and pod" approach, and is comprised of a three-rack pod design, which provides enhanced visibility and automation with vSphere server virtualization deployments. The Big Cloud Fabric controller is a single pane of glass that integrates directly with vCenter to automate network application deployment on the physical SDN fabric. In essence, combining three distinct data centers into one cloud network.

Big Cloud Fabric then became the single point of integration with vCenter for an entire Leaf-Spine Clos fabric, helping eliminate bandwidth bottlenecks. Integration of Big Cloud Fabric with vCenter also enables VM visibility, including VM mobility events, directly through the Big Cloud Fabric controller GUI.

"Dubai Municipality was able to deploy Big Cloud Fabric in only eight days, across three data centers, transforming the infrastructure from a traditional network topology to next-generation SDN. The success of this project was the result of the training provided to us from Big Switch at the company's U.S. headquarters and an intelligent, agile, and flexible solution. The complete configuration and deployment was done in-house, proving both our team's capabilities and Big Switch's technology."



Results

WITH THIS NEW DATA CENTER NETWORK, DUBAI MUNICIPALITY EXPERIENCED THE FOLLOWING ADVANTAGES:

- Increased network performance, speed and bandwidth
- Increased switching speed by 42x
- Increased backbone capacity by 16x
- Reduced overall infrastructure size
- Improved operational efficiency by managing network through single pane of glass (BCF Controller)
- Combined three Physical Datacenters into one Logical Cloud, reducing physical and logical migration costs by 90%

Other benefits Dubai Municipality was able to achieve include: reduced migration complexities and costs with a network architecture that is based on software-defined policies. Reduced costs on required infrastructures by spanning all fabric traffic to security-related devices. True integration of Big Switch to vCenter, enabling faster deployment of services by orchestrating the network layer. And lastly, Dubai Municipality is ready to efficiently adapt to future cloud and open technologies to continue its mission of evolving the Emirate of Dubai.

The next phase of Dubai Municipality's data center modernization project is to deploy VMware Horizon VDI, which will integrate with Big Cloud Fabric so that Dubai Municipality is able to simplify, automate and rapidly provision its VDI environment.

ADDITIONAL BIG CLOUD FABRIC ENHANCEMENTS FOR VSPHERE DEPLOYMENTS INCLUDE:

- Auto Host Detection & LAG Formation
- Auto L2 Network Creation & VM Learning
- Network Policy Migration for vMotion/DRS
- VM-level Visibility (VM name, vMotion)
- VM-to-VM Troubleshooting (Logical & Physical)

Big Cloud Fabric is a Leaf-Spine Clos fabric with centralized SDN control that operates as one logical switch with a single pane of glass for network management instead of the traditional manual box by box management paradigm. The innovative BCF architecture provides order of magnitude improvements in ease of use and manageability of data center networks by offering the following transformative benefits:

- **Simple to Provision** – Enables rapid provisioning and segmentation of tenants – key for the physical network to operate at the speed of VMs. This includes network automation for both OpenStack and VMware components.
- **Simple to Operate** – Enhance productivity with a zero-touch fabric and single-point management that provides significant day to day operational efficiencies. Administrators configure, manage, debug/troubleshoot, and upgrade BCF using CLI, GUI, or REST API – familiar networking technologies. This centralized view enhances operational simplicity by providing a single dashboard as well as quick and easy access to troubleshooting, analytics and telemetry information.
- **Simple to Scale** – A logical chassis enables an elastic pod architecture that can grow from 2 racks to tens of racks seamlessly as required by business needs. Additionally, faster time to service enablement as well as rapid (hitless) network software upgrades enable rapid deployment of new features. For example, the BCF architecture has a single pane of glass controller, eliminating the need to individually configure and manage each switch like with traditional networking approaches.
- **Economical** – Reduces overall TCO by up to 50% compared to a legacy networking infrastructure. Specifically, Dubai Municipality was able to eliminate core switch renewals, reduce migration costs, and downscale technology investments to exactly what was needed, which included moving from an ISP router to more economical entry-level hardware.
- **Deep Visibility** – Delivers unprecedented network visibility for cloud-native applications and the software-defined data center at any scale.



Big Cloud Fabric is a highly differentiated data center switching fabric that delivers zero-touch operations and network automation via an agile, SDN-based approach to physical network management. BCFs integration into VMware SDDC is extremely flexible and allows networking and cloud teams to take advantage of rich automation and visibility options incrementally, or all at once.

In VMware vSphere environments, the BCF Controller directly integrates into VMware vCenter to simplify and automate application deployments on its physical SDN fabric, across both virtual and physical networks, management is through a single pane of glass. Many aspects of the network become automated, requiring zero intervention from VM or network admin. This solution also allows Network Admins to gain full visibility of virtualization environments, thus enabling rapid troubleshooting and resolution of issues. According to ACG Research, BCF excels in ease of use and manageability, by making:

- **8x faster:** Initial setup for VMware environments
- **12x faster:** to configure, deploy applications and troubleshoot
- **30x faster:** to upgrade traditional networks

The team from Dubai Municipality who were responsible for this project, from proof of concept through deployment include: His Excellency Eng. Hussain Lootah, Director General at Dubai Municipality, Mr. Mohammad Al Zaffin, IT Director at Dubai Municipality, Mr. Ahmed Kajoor, Head of IT Infrastructure at Dubai Municipality and Mr. Ahmad Al Emadi, IT Infrastructure Project Manager at Dubai Municipality.

To learn more about Big Cloud Fabric, register for BSN Labs to get hands-on experience via our self-paced labs modules. To register (it's free): <http://labs.bigswitch.com>