

CASE STUDY



SWITZERLAND



MANUFACTURING

GLOBAL MANUFACTURER ESTABLISHES CENTRAL NETWORK CONTROL TO ACCELERATE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Establish template for
network consistency, to raise
performance levels and drive
manufacturing innovation



SCHURTER is a global manufacturer of electronic components, input systems and complete solutions. The SCHURTER Group comprises 21 companies in 17 countries, with its headquarters in Lucerne, Switzerland.

“For us, the network is more than a technical component,” says Urs Heller, Head of Enterprise Services & CDO, SCHURTER Group. “The network sits at the heart of everything we do, from communication to collaboration to product development and operations.”

STANDARDISATION TO DRIVE MANUFACTURING CERTAINTY

Digital transformation, Heller continues, is imperative. SCHURTER needs to drive operational efficiencies to compete in a global marketplace; it must connect local teams with central management; gather data and share insight. Digital can also strengthen product tracing and streamline global supply chains.

“If we produce part of a product, we need to be able to trace its manufacture and component materials,” he explains. “This is a must-have. Some of our customers are in the medical or food industries. Regulations require us to track global production.”

The global operation is increasingly harmonised. Several SCHURTER group companies already work very closely together in order to exchange real-time production information. The future is likely to see higher orchestration between production sites.



REQUIREMENTS

- Create global network blueprint to drive consistency
- Reduce resources needed for network management
- Establish network SLAs

SOLUTION

- Aruba 500 series Access Points
- Aruba CX 8320 series Core Switches
- Aruba CX 6200 series Access Switches
- ClearPass network access control
- Aruba Central

OUTCOMES

- Allows automation of secure network segmentation for employees, partners, visitors and manufacturing-involved parties.
- Delivers seamless mobility across offices, production facilities and distribution sites
- Simplifies integration of third-party applications, helping drive digital transformation

Consistency is key to SCHURTER’s success. Standardisation drives consistency, says Heller. He wants a consistent network experience across global operations, from performance to support to SLAs: “Our goal is to have one network partner, one set of SLAs and one support relationship. I need clear accountability.” All these services are offered on a high level through BNC Business Network Communications AG.

CREATING A GLOBAL NETWORK TEMPLATE

SCHURTER’s global network is built on Aruba and designed and delivered by BNC, a long-term Aruba partner. It includes Aruba CX 8320 switches in the core and Aruba CX 6200F access switches, plus Aruba 500-series access points. Aruba ClearPass establishes secure network access. SCHURTER then manages the



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URS HELLER

Head of Enterprise Services & CDO

devices and services via Aruba Central, with BNC on hand for support.

“It’s a very pragmatic approach,” says Reto Fallegger, Solutions Architect Cloud & Data Center at BNC, and a former SCHURTER IT Specialist on Heller’s team.

“SCHURTER wants to be active in its network management but recognises it will need specific expertise

from time to time. If the company needs help, we’re here.”

Heller says the choice of Aruba was an easy one: “This is a long-term commitment. There are very few brands with the strength, product roadmap and network vision. The combination of Aruba and BNC is key for our success.”

ESTABLISHING NETWORK SERVICE LEVELS

Today, the three SCHURTER sites in Switzerland are connected via the Aruba network. The hardware and management layers provide a template for global operations, though local operating companies will be allowed to continue with their own network providers, as long as they can guarantee support and service levels.

The Swiss network is now more robust and performant. For the first time, there are measures in place to chart network performance and plan continued improvements.

In SCHURTER offices, employees use Microsoft 365 services, accessed through the networking core. Logistics teams in SCHURTER distribution centres work from handheld scanners, connected at the edge. Aruba ClearPass manages secure access for visitors.

As SCHURTER explores new digital opportunities, whether workplace collaboration or Industry 4.0, the Aruba open architecture simplifies the task of integrating new third-party applications.

“We’re currently exploring the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning in manufacturing,” Heller says. “We are looking at how this might optimise our processes and minimise waste in production, as well as gain a better control over operations.”

TOWARDS NETWORK-AS-A-SERVICE

The Aruba engagement establishes a template for global consistency and creates, should the conditions



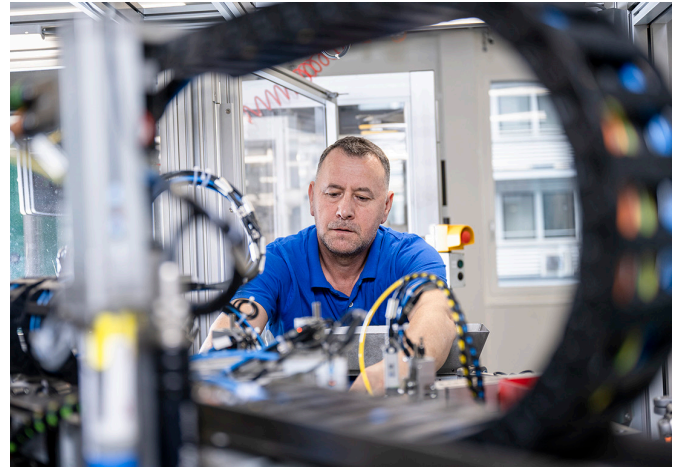


be right, a roadmap to handover network management entirely as-a-service.

“Currently our focus is hands-on network management,” says Heller. “We have many business projects which depend on network changes and these must be handled by the local IT team. Our top priority for any member of staff is for them to be able to visit any SCHURTER site and access the network without delay or interruption.”

The use of Aruba Central enables SCHURTER to bring new locations online quickly and with the minimum of resources. Hardware is sent to the new location, the installation is managed by local teams, with configuration handled by the network team at the Lucerne head office.

“We’re very happy to have BNC by our side, empowered by Aruba,” says Heller. “This is a highly strategic



relationship where we grow together. We have many digital projects underway, and though we have skilled network engineers at SCHURTER, it is likely we will hand more operations over to BNC.”



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