

Belgacom Network Operations Center

Facing tomorrow's challenges with a networked, LED video wall

“Because our Barco video wall is now part of a network centralized platform, we can solve issues even before they can do any harm. Our customers know that we can assure them permanent service availability.”

Peter Vandermaesen,
Director ICT Service Desk, Belgacom



In today's highly connected world, round-the-clock availability of our telecoms network is crucial, for consumers as well as companies. Telecoms operators therefore invest heavily in robust solutions to monitor the networks and intervene when necessary. At Belgium's telecom leader Belgacom, the operators in the Network Operation Center make sure everything runs smoothly, 24/7.

Since 2005, a Barco video wall has been facilitating their work. A recent upgrade has enabled them to anticipate future challenges even better. The new Transform N platform guarantees a smooth and secure transfer of video, images and data between different workstations and walls, thus fostering collaboration. And by replacing the lamps by LEDs, Belgacom saves hugely on maintenance costs, while boosting its eco-friendly image.

BARCO

Visibly yours

Customer:
Belgacom
Field: telecom services
Web: <http://www.belgacom.be>

Challenges and objectives:

- Distributing information across a network centralized platform
- Decreasing the cost of ownership of the existing video wall

Barco solution and services:

- Upgrade from lamp-based to LED-lit rear-projection video wall
- TransForm N network visualization platform

Why Barco

- positive past experiences
- full integration of soft- and hardware
- minimal impact on running installation
- great service and in-depth preparation



As Belgium's largest telecom services provider, Belgacom has always used reliable and efficient technologies. Due to the spectacularly increased network traffic over the last years, new challenges have emerged. To tackle them efficiently, Belgacom chose to continue collaborating with Barco for network monitoring. "For our customers, it's all about trust," said Peter Vandermaesen, Director ICT Service Desk at Belgacom.

The operators in the Network Operations Center play a key role in the top-quality service Belgacom pledges to its customers. After the installation of the Barco video wall in 2005, they professionally monitored all the telephone and Internet traffic on the 4 x 2 cube wall. Shortly after, four cubes were added. When television went digital, television signals were also 'put on the wall'.

Proactive monitoring

More than monitoring existing signals, operators are always proactively reacting to bandwidth issues and preventing network breakdowns. Every New Year's Eve, for example, is a challenge. The last one, with over 30 million text messages and 2.8 million MB of data traffic, was handled successfully.

"For our customers, telecommunications are crucial," said Vandermaesen. "So we can no longer afford a few minutes of outage. We need to monitor our services end-to-end. That way, we can detect issues and solve them even before they can do any harm." By adopting this approach, Belgacom shows that it takes the trust of its customers seriously.

Swift responses in crisis situations

The installation of the Barco TransForm N platform greatly improved the team's agility and collaborative power. The operators can now easily share and distribute important information between workstations and walls in different rooms and locations. As timing is critical when facing network challenges, Belgacom also required the networked solution to enable swift responses from decision-makers. "In case of a crisis, it's key to have the right people around the table, even at different locations," explained Vandermaesen. "With the new network centralized platform, we can distribute important information to different war rooms and crisis centers. Within seconds, everybody has a crystal-clear overview of the status of the network. It helps us work together much more efficiently."

Customers too love the new functionality. Vandermaesen: "We often invite key customers to visit our Network Operations Center. The wall instills trust: they can see how we assure a 24/7 monitoring service."

Lower cost of ownership

A second adjustment to the video wall helped Belgacom save money: with the installation of LEDs, the cost of ownership decreased spectacularly. "It's fair to say that on the maintenance part, we now save considerably on costs. The old lamps were expensive and had to be replaced quite often. LEDs have a much longer lifetime. Moreover, they combine high brightness with excellent visual performance," said Gorik Everaet, Incident Manager at Belgacom.

Besides the big financial advantages, Everaet also stressed the importance of being an ecological forerunner: "At Belgacom, we always try to reduce our carbon footprint. With the new LED technology, we've been able to reduce it by more than 50%."

Minimal impact on the existing installation

As Belgacom has been collaborating with Barco for some years now, they knew they could expect exceptional quality. Everaet saw yet other major advantages of working with Barco: "Barco was the only one who could provide us a full integration, delivering both their soft- and hardware. The in-depth preparation by our expert teams and the Barco pre-sales teams went very smoothly. It allowed us to decrease the implementation time, with minimal disruption to the existing installation."