

# INFRABEL

## A close partnership on the tracks

Every day, thousands of trains travel on the Belgian railroad network. The railroad infrastructure and safety systems are managed by Infrabel. In order to steer train traffic efficiently and reliably in the right direction, a flawlessly functioning data infrastructure is crucial.



Mathieu Bovy, Business Development Manager at Kannegieter and Alain Janssens, Data Center Manager at Infrabel

Legrand and distributor Kannegieter joined forces to supply racks for Infrabel's various data centers. The goal? To offer a total package of future-proof, robust and sustainable data center racks and related services, while respecting the agreed deadlines and taking into account the specific needs and wishes of the railroad manager.

### STRICT CRITERIA

This project shot out of the starting blocks in 2017. That's when Legrand, Kannegieter and Infrabel concluded a framework agreement. Alain Janssens, data center manager at Infrabel, outlines the framework as an end customer: "For our data centers in Brussels, Muizen and Monceau, we needed high-quality data racks, supplemented with the necessary cabling. This material had to meet strict technical requirements for, among other things, optimal airflow management and cable management. After all, an outage in a data center means that trains are not running, which of course has a serious negative impact on train traffic in our country. Moreover, our data centers are identified as nationally critical infrastructures."

### LEGRAND AND KANNEGIETER AS PRIVILEGED PARTNERS

After drawing up specifications and conducting a market survey, the partnership of Legrand and distributor Kannegieter emerged as the most interesting party. "Having been a joint

## CUSTOMERCASE

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Alain Janssens, Data Center Manager at Infrabel



supplier to Infrabel for almost fifteen years, we were able to tailor our offer well to the technical, service and price criteria of the rail operator" confirms Mathieu Bovy, Business Development Manager at Kannegieter. "The real start of the project took place in the December 2017, with the preparation of a detailed offer. From then on, it was important to meet regularly with colleagues from Legrand and Infrabel to continuously monitor the entire project and make adjustments where necessary."

### DATA CENTERS: WIDE RANGE OF APPLICATIONS

Data centers are crucial to Infrabel for optimal management and service delivery. "We deploy our data centers for a wide range of internal and external services" says Alain. "The control of the railroad network is one of them, but there is also the management of customer relations or of our own cell phone network, so that we do not have to depend on external operators. Because of these critical applications, we set the bar high for the installation and delivery of the data center racks. Each subproject simply had to be completed flawlessly and as quickly as possible."

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### PROJECT-BASED APPROACH

Alain indicates that the collaboration with Legrand and Kannegieter was excellent: "For each subproject, we wanted to apply a project-based approach, whereby quick adjustments could be made to omit or add building blocks to proposed solutions." Lieven Vansteenkiste, Sales Manager BeLux Legrand Data Center Solutions, can confirm this: "In large-scale projects such as this one - in which we supplied a total of 285 data racks - we are often confronted with unexpected challenges in practice. For example, the specific location of Klein Eiland - without a loading quay - provided the necessary logistical puzzle to get all the equipment on site in safe conditions. However, Kannegieter's colleagues provided excellent coordination here, so Alain and his Infrabel colleagues did not have to worry about this."

### COORDINATING AND ANTICIPATING

The experts at Legrand and Kannegieter have been perfectly attuned to each other for years, and this is also evident in the preparation and execution of this project. "As a team, we want to relieve the end customer of all their worries in all phases of the project," points out Mathieu. "We pay great attention to good coordination and quality control, so that the installed solutions always meet the predefined design. In this project, we also anticipated the short lead times. We did this by keeping several installation teams on standby, which allowed us to react very quickly. In addition, the products were assembled in

advance. While this made the preliminary process a little longer, it resulted in a much faster on-site installation."

### NEXPAND SOLUTIONS TAILORED TO THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS

"With the Nexpanse server and network cabinets, complemented by Nexpanse Corridors, we offer Infrabel an ideal solution for modular and energy-efficient data centers" explains Lieven. "This flexible environment gives the customer plenty of room for future modifications. At the same time, we provided customization for retrofit corridors that were built into existing cabinets. And also to the specification requirement of the most economical application, we were able to provide an answer for the optimization of the PUE value."

Alain adds: "In our old data centers, cold air was blown into entire rooms to cool them. Today, thanks to the use of the latest containment solutions from Minkels, the volume to be cooled is a lot smaller. This quickly results in considerable energy cost savings. Energy efficiency is a very important strategic policy point for Infrabel. Data centers consume an enormous amount of energy, and so together with Legrand and Kannegieter we continue to make the necessary efforts to reduce our ecological footprint." ■