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Luxembourg Data Centre? Surely not!

Submitted by Alex Rabbetts on Mon, 17/08/2009 - 14:52.

Luxembourg is one of those little known, little thought about countries somewhere in the middle of Europe ... or so you might think. Actually, Luxembourg is a thriving country nestled between France, Germany and Belgium. A 1 hour flight from London, less than 2 hours drive from Frankfurt, just 2 hours from Paris by train and an hour by plane from Amsterdam, Luxembourg is at the heart of Europe. With superb T1 connectivity through redundant links with several providers the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is extremely well placed at the heart of Europe to provide data centre services.

Why then, is it not considered a Tier 1 city? Probably, because those that decide what a Tier 1 city is, (mainly real estate agents), don't know much about it. Luxembourg has all the attributes of a Tier 1 city, but for some reason, it is almost forgotten when it comes to commentators on the data centre market.

So what about data centre space? Does Luxembourg have any? Very much so! There are a number of data centre operators in the Grand Duchy, but probably the biggest is called eBRC. Never heard of them? Rather like Luxembourg itself, eBRC is one of Europe's best kept secrets! Let's put this in perspective - there are quite a number of data centre operators across Europe and we at Migration Solutions have visited most. eBRC offer a range of data centre services from Disaster Recovery, Managed Hosting, through to Workplace Recovery out of their existing data centres. A new data centre is currently under construction and is due to be commissioned in Q2 2010. What's so special about eBRC data centres, you may ask. Firstly, they are the closest thing to true Tier 4 anywhere in Europe. Many, many data centre operators claim to be 'Tier 4', or worse, 'Tier 3 Plus' but few come even close! The eBRC facility in Windhof is about as close as you can get. With true 2N+1 redundancy, a whole host of additional resilience, direct T1 connectivity, it is surely ticking every box in the Tier 4 resilience and redundancy requirements. But it isn't just resilience and redundancy, (as many rather naïve operators seem to think), Tier 4 has many more requirements than just the resilience and redundancy; not less than 91m from a 100 year flood plain, (that's just excluded most of London, Amsterdam and parts of Paris and Frankfurt!), no less than 18.3m distance between visitor parking and the data centre perimeter walls, (again, this excludes most European data centres), we could go on and on.

Let's not forget about the Workplace Recovery. Speed of deployment is everything in this market. eBRC would appear to be completely unrivalled in their ability to deploy a typical environment within 8, (yes that's 8), minutes!

Why are Migration Solutions talking about eBRC, a Luxembourg data centre operator, when we have always fiercely defended our vendor independence? Firstly, Migration Solutions has no commercial relationship with eBRC, (or any other vendor), but we think this is a data centre operator that is noteworthy. Secondly, the Windhof data centre is impressive in its own right, but the new facility currently under construction in Kayl looks to be even better still!

Most operators claiming Tier 4 are nowhere near ... and most that have even some elements of the Tier 4 standards have missed the point. From an environmental perspective, Tier 4 has never been 'green', but here again eBRC are on the right lines. The power provision to all eBRC data centres is 100%, (yes, 100%), green and from renewable sources ... and that is certified! The view taken by eBRC is that by providing such a well constructed and well run facility, they are encouraging their customers to reduce their own carbon footprint in running poorly constructed and inefficient data centres. Its a pretty strong argument!

The new Kayl facility promises to be even better than Windhof. We at Migration Solutions believe that to be true. Organisations considering London, Amsterdam, Paris, Frankfurt or Madrid to locate their IT, would be well advised to consider Luxembourg too. (And let's not forget there may be financial advantages to Luxembourg too!)

Luxembourg is at the heart of Europe, is T1 connected, has probably the best data centre facilities in Europe and is virtually unknown! Any organisation looking at data centre space, regardless of whether it is for a primary or for a disaster recovery site, should consider Luxembourg as an equivalent Tier 1 city with very high quality facilities to offer.

Migration Solutions is fiercely vendor independent, and remains so, but has long campaigned for operators to come clean about their facilities, to stop abusing the lack of general knowledge of the Uptime Institute's Tiering Standards, (or at the very least invest in a copy of the standards so that they know which Tier they would fall into!), and to increase the general standard of build and operation of data centres. The eBRC data centres, and the company, are unpretentious and genuine

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in their approach to data centre operation and, for this reason alone, should be considered as one of the major players in the European market.

Luxembourg must soon be acknowledged as the next Tier 1 city in Europe. It has exceedingly high quality facilities that are well built and well run. It may have the first European data centre to actually be certified as Tier 4 and, without any doubt at all, this small country will be very important indeed in the next evolution of the data centre world! Remember, you heard it here first!

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