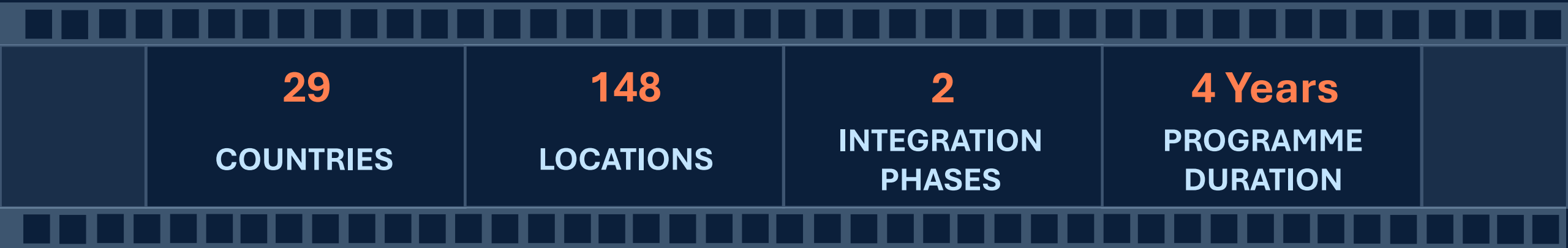


| M&A INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION

Post-Acquisition Network Infrastructure Integration

Turning fragmented legacy infrastructure across 29 countries into one global standard – without disrupting operations.



*Most post-acquisition infrastructure integrations begin with a clear assumption:
the acquiring entity sets the standard, and the acquired entity adapts.*

This programme was more complex than that.

When an acquired organisation has never been properly integrated at the infrastructure level and has operated with near-complete local autonomy for years, there is no clean starting point.

There is no unified inventory to work from, no documented architecture to assess, and no single point of accountability to coordinate through.

Before integration could begin, the real environment had to be understood. Not the documented one, because it largely did not exist.

What followed was not a simple connection exercise. It was a full infrastructure integration programme; covering assessment, architecture definition, provider coordination, phased migration, and full standardisation across five technology domains in 29 countries.

All delivered without disrupting operations across 148 locations.

The real integration challenge was not technical. It was navigating the human complexity of two organisations that did not perceive themselves as unequal.

The Situation

When a major international acquisition closed, the infrastructure reality was more complex than the deal model had assumed.

The acquired organisation operated 148 locations across 29 countries. But its infrastructure had not been fully integrated.

Previous acquisitions had been handled primarily at the application and reporting level, leaving local infrastructure environments largely unchanged.

The result was a fragmented landscape of legacy networks, local providers, regional arrangements, and inconsistent standards accumulated across years of partial integrations.

This acquisition did not just require connecting two organisations. It required addressing layers of accumulated technical fragmentation while maintaining operational continuity across all locations and meeting the timelines set by the broader business integration programme.

DECISION MADE

The infrastructure integration had to run in parallel with — and ahead of — the SAP and enterprise system migration programme.

STARTING POINT

148 locations across 29 countries. Infrastructure never fully integrated from previous acquisitions.

THE REAL CHALLENGE

Fragmentation accumulated silently across years of partial integrations and was only visible when genuine unification was required.

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The Challenge

Four factors made this programme particularly complex. The starting information gap was significant. What the integration team needed; network designs, configuration standards, operational procedures largely did not exist in documented form. Knowledge lived with individuals, not in systems.

The scope was genuinely global. 29 countries, 148 locations; each with different local providers, regulatory requirements, and operational realities that had to be managed simultaneously.

The infrastructure had to remain stable throughout. Any significant disruption would directly impact business operations and delay downstream SAP and enterprise system integration milestones.

And the human dimension was the most underestimated factor of all. The two organisations were broadly similar in size. The acquired organisation's IT teams did not perceive themselves as the smaller party. Resistance was significant, cooperation was inconsistent, and trust had to be built from scratch in parallel with delivering a technically complex programme under business pressure.

KEY CONTEXT

Information was difficult to obtain because it had never been documented. Cooperation was inconsistent. Trust had to be built in parallel with delivery.

CRITICAL FACTOR 1

Starting information gap; architecture, standards, and operational procedures largely undocumented. Knowledge lived with individuals.

CRITICAL FACTOR 2

Human complexity rivalled technical complexity — two organisations of comparable size, significant resistance from the acquired IT teams.

EXTERNAL PRESSURE

Downstream SAP migration timelines, infrastructure foundation had to be in place before enterprise system integration could proceed.

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The Approach — Part 1 of 2: Assessment & Architecture

I led the planning and execution of the full network infrastructure integration programme.

The work began with a structured assessment of the existing landscape, not just the network architecture, but the operational models, provider relationships, and accumulated technical debt across each region.

Understanding the real environment, not the documented one, was essential before any integration roadmap could be defined. This required persistent effort and personal relationships with local IT teams who held knowledge that existed nowhere in writing.

From there, I defined a centralised architecture and integration roadmap, establishing the target model before engaging with provider and migration sequencing decisions.

Architecture first. Migration second. A deliberate sequencing decision that ensured the programme was built around a consistent standard rather than inherited constraints.

STARTING POINT

No unified inventory. No documented architecture. Assessment had to reconstruct the real landscape from individual knowledge holders.

KEY CONTEXT

Understanding the real environment, not the documented one, was essential before any roadmap could be defined.

DESIGN PRINCIPLE

Centralised architecture defined before migration sequencing — ensuring all 148 locations moved toward one consistent standard.

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The Approach — Part 2 of 2: Execution & Delivery

With the architecture defined and the roadmap agreed, the programme moved into phased execution; coordinating regional IT teams, service providers, and business stakeholders across 29 countries simultaneously.

Phase 1: Spanning approximately two years, focused on connecting all acquired locations to the global network environment and establishing the infrastructure foundation required for the SAP migration. This included managing site consolidations where both organisations had operations in the same country, closing or merging offices as the combined entity rationalised its footprint.

Phase 2: A further two years, delivered full standardisation across MPLS, LAN, Wi-Fi, internet, and security services globally, bringing all 148 locations to a consistent infrastructure standard within the unified operating model.

Migration sequencing was managed carefully to protect service continuity at every stage. Continuous communication with regional and business stakeholders ran throughout both phases.

KEY CONTEXT

Delivered across five technology domains — MPLS, LAN, Wi-Fi, internet, and security — across 29 countries in two structured phases.

PHASE 1, ~ 2 YEARS

Global connectivity established. Infrastructure foundation for SAP migration delivered. Site consolidations managed.

PHASE 2, ~ 2 YEARS

Full standardisation across all five technology domains. All 148 locations brought to unified operating standard.

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The Outcome

Infrastructure integration was completed successfully across all 148 locations in 29 countries.

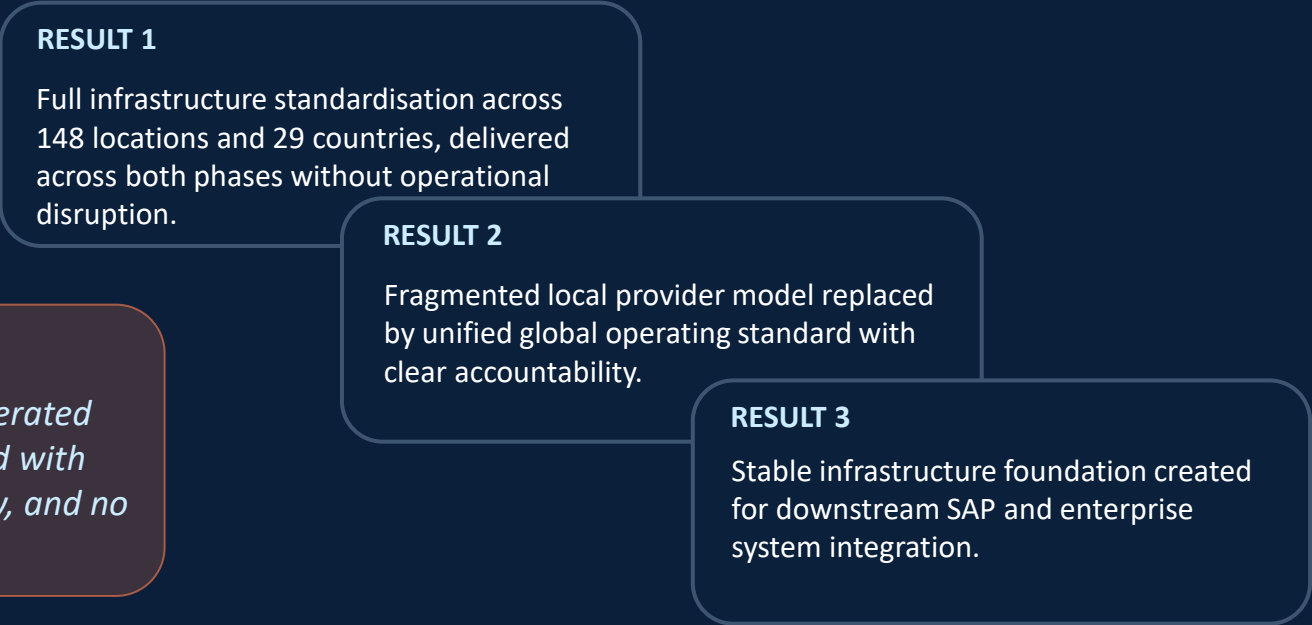
The centralised infrastructure model simplified operations, established consistent service standards across regions, and created a stable technical foundation for the broader enterprise system integration that followed.

The transition from fragmented local providers to a unified global model reduced operational complexity and established clear accountability across all locations, replacing a landscape where responsibility had been distributed, informal, and largely undocumented.

The programme delivered what the deal model had assumed but the infrastructure reality had put at risk: a single, standardised operating environment capable of supporting the combined organisation going forward.

KEY CONTEXT

For the first time, all 148 locations operated within a single infrastructure standard with consistent service, clear accountability, and no fragmented local arrangements.



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Large acquisitions rarely inherit clean infrastructure. When previous integrations focused on applications while leaving local infrastructure unchanged, technical fragmentation accumulates silently and surfaces as complexity only when the next acquisition requires genuine unification.

Full infrastructure integration is not measured in months. In large multinationals operating across dozens of countries, it is measured in years with each phase unlocking the next layer of business integration.

Addressing infrastructure reality early before business integration timelines are locked is the difference between a programme that delivers on its synergy assumptions and one that quietly stretches from months into years.

The human dimension is rarely captured in integration plans. When two organisations of comparable size come together, the assumption that one simply adapts to the other is often wrong. Resistance, information gaps, and the absence of documentation are not obstacles to the programme. They are the programme.

KEY CONTEXT

Addressing infrastructure reality early, before business integration timelines are locked, is the difference between a programme that delivers and one that quietly stretches.

LESSON 1

Fragmentation accumulates silently. It only becomes visible when genuine unification is required by which point timelines are already under pressure.

LESSON 2

The human complexity in same-size acquisitions is systematically underestimated. Trust and information access must be built, they cannot be assumed.

Programme at a glance

 29 Countries	 148 Locations	 2 Integration Phases	 4 Years Full Programme Duration
 5 Technology Domains	 ~2 YEARS – Phase 1 Duration	 ~2 YEARS – Phase 2 Duration	 Zero Operational Disruption

When integration risk should **not** wait.



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