PACKET POWER CREATED A SIMPLE SOLUTION FOR A RAPIDLY GROWING COMPANY'S COMPLEX NEEDS

Involta needed a monitoring system that could meet the needs of their new and existing facilities. Packet Power delivered

When equipping its facilities in Duluth, Minnesota, and Akron, Ohio, Involta had very specific requirements. As a multi-tenant data center, the company needed to track its power consumption at the cabinet level for billing purposes as well as for its own capacity-planning needs. The information had to be highly accurate and specific to each client. It also had to be obtained using hardware that integrated well with the unique power-distribution design in those newer facilities. Packet Power was chosen because it met all these needs.

At the Duluth, Minnesota, data center, Involta focused on monitoring power usage. At the Akron, Ohio, facility, Packet Power was initially brought in for power monitoring, but Involta is now also exploring how Packet Power can help track temperature and humidity in that data center. Packet Power's products are also widely used in the Tucson, AZ and Boise, ID data centers

CUSTOMER Involta™

LOCATION: USA (multiple sites)

DATA CENTER TYPE: Colocation

CUSTOMER OBJECTIVES:

- operations management
- **cost allocation**
- energy efficiency
- **data center retrofit**
- cooling

"It's simple. It's a proven product, and it's been integrated well."

Tom Lang
Data Center Manager
Involta's Akron, Ohio

ABOUT INVOLTA

Involta is an award-winning provider of enterprise-class, multi-tenant data center and managed IT services for clients nationwide. The company is expanding steadily. With eight facilities located across five states, Involta serves a growing list of diverse clients from industries that include oil and gas, manufacturing, Web development, city municipalities, medical organizations, financial institutions, green energy and retail. These businesses, with revenue in the millions to upwards of five billion, depend on Involta to efficiently, effectively and securely deliver solutions for their data and IT needs.

Involta's Challenge

In eight facilities located across five states, Involta runs co-tenant data centers and IT solutions for clients with complex and diverse needs. At its initial facility in Marion, Iowa, Involta used a branch circuit monitoring system deployed at the power sub-panels. When designing two newer data centers – located in Duluth, Minnesota, and Akron, Ohio – the company used a different power-distribution design. They implemented STARLINE Track Busways, which use overhead busways to deliver power to drop circuits above the rack level. Involta needed a power monitoring option that was more robust than they had used at the Marion facility, a system that would integrate well with the busway design and easily monitor and report back on power consumption.

The Deciding Factors

Involta saw in Packet Power a system that:

- **Could be installed easily and deployed quickly.** Mistelske notes that implementation was straightforward. They configured the cabinets and attached Packet Power's small, wireless power sensors. The sensors immediately began generating data that Involta could access easily via Packet Power's EMX® Energy Portal, and the install was complete.

- **Was a value-add for customers.** Packet Power gave Involta the capacity to create custom dashboards for individual customers. Each dashboard can present varying degrees of information on the basis of what the customer wishes to see. Customers get all the information they need from Involta, so there is no need for them to purchase their own smart PDUs. They save money and time by choosing Involta and using Packet Power's systems. In addition to full-time monitoring within the facility, there is an alert structure that goes out to cell phones and 24/7 staff for emergencies. This is critical for Involta because its customers depend on the company for the success of their businesses. Even a small outage could have a significant business impact.

- **Facilitated monthly billing for individual customers.** As a co-tenant data center, Involta needed the capacity to bill customers on a monthly basis. Packet Power's systems allow Involta to generate an aggregated monthly report. Involta's finance department then uses the report to conveniently and accurately bill customers based on their individual usages.

- **Was supported by excellent customer service.** Data Center Managers Tom Lang and Lucas Mistelske both mentioned their satisfaction with Packet Power's customer service operation. The customer service has been responsive. Lang explains that, "Any issue has been quickly acknowledged, responded to and resolved in short turn – none of which have been service impacting by any means. We've never lost power-consumption data to date." Mistelske adds that he is particularly pleased with the "can-do" attitude of Packet Power's customer service operation. He notes that it takes feedback very openly and very well, takes feature requests and product requests, and it is a very dynamic environment from a customer perspective. "I place a lot of value in that," he said.

INVOLTA'S CHOICE

At the time the STARLINE equipment was chosen, Involta considered two options for monitoring: a Critical Power Monitor (CPM) that was being developed by STARLINE and Packet Power. They chose Packet Power. Duluth, Minnesota, Data Center Manager Lucas Mistelske, explained that with Packet Power, "we could add branch circuit monitoring into every receptacle we dropped in, at the branch circuit level, without a whole lot of effort. On top of that, it gave us all the temperature-specific sensors that were included. It also gave us a clean and easy visual tool that we could carve off and provide to our clients."

What Does the Future Hold for Involta and Packet Power?

Involta's Duluth, Minnesota, facility relies on Packet Power for power usage and temperature monitoring, while the Akron, Ohio, facility currently only partners with Packet Power for power usage monitoring. Going forward, the Akron facility will be pursuing environmental monitoring as well.

Environmental monitoring is critical to Involta and is one of the company's SLA metrics for delivering service to their customers. Involta guarantees certain server inlet temperatures that are in alignment with ASHRAE standards.

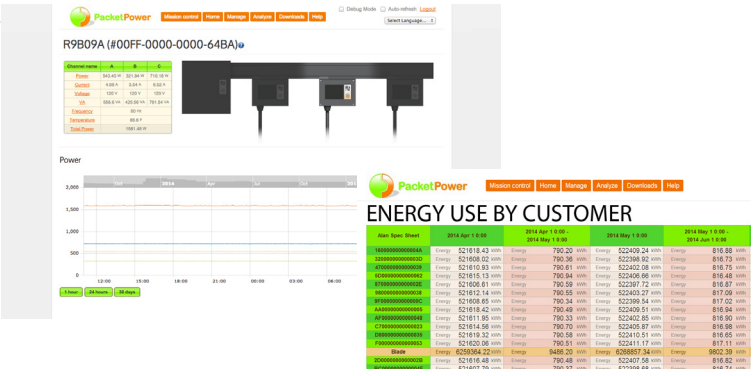
Currently, the Duluth facility's temperature monitors are positioned in the hot aisles, working as top-of-rack hot-aisle sensors. The facility is planning to add additional temperature and humidity sensors to the cold aisles to be certain that data also is being captured. The new temperature and humidity sensors will communicate on Packet Power's network, through the same set of gateways that are already in place

Packet Power wireless Smart Cables provide power information for each circuit of Involta's busway.

At the Akron facility, Data Center Manager Tom Lang is getting ready to implement environmental monitoring. His facility currently does monitoring through pre-set inlet and return sensors that are in the facility's mechanical systems. As the company has gained customers and use of the data center has increased, so has the need for accuracy in humidity and temperature reporting.

He will be turning to Packet Power for help. Lang explains that, "it makes sense to continue working with Packet Power. We invested with them regarding the power side, and it's worked well, so why not explore the temperature and humidity side as well?"

Packet Power is proud that its partnership with Involta has grown to include their Tucson and Boise facilities, and both companies look forward to continued growth in the future.



EMX Energy Portal delivers energy and environnemental information in an easy to read, intuitive format..

ABOUT PACKETPOWER

Since 2008, Packet Power wireless power and environmental monitoring has given companies around the world an easier and more cost effective way to deploy power and environmental monitoring in data centers. Packet Power's client's access highly accurate monitoring data via Packet Power's own application or through any third party monitoring system. Most importantly for Involta, its wireless Smart Cables and EMX reporting engine provided a low-hassle, high-ROI solution that worked across their existing data centers.