



EQUINIX CASE STUDY

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE CLOUD DRIVES GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY



Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency

UK government agency chooses interconnection strategy with Equinix Cloud Exchange Fabric™ (ECX Fabric™) as it moves services to the cloud, cutting latency by two-thirds and slashing time to add new connections from months to hours.

Business results to date

- Reduced latency from 25 ms to 8 ms when connecting to Microsoft Azure.
- Enabled DVSA staff to have fast, responsive access to cloud-based applications.
- Improved flexibility and responsiveness, with the ability to provision new connections in as little as one hour, compared to four months previously.
- Automated operations, making new services available to staff at more than 500 locations within seconds of being added to the cloud.
- Reduced vendor lock-in, so DVSA can easily move between cloud providers to take advantage of better contract terms and save money.
- Improved reliability, with zero downtime.

Business overview

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is an executive agency of the UK government. Its priorities are “helping everyone through a lifetime of safe driving” (which includes running motorists’ driving tests), “helping everyone keep their vehicle safe to drive” (by carrying out, for example, the MOT exhaust-emissions test on cars and testing vehicles for roadworthiness) and “protecting everyone from unsafe drivers and vehicles” (which includes monitoring vehicle recalls). DVSA employs 4,600 people in more than 500 locations, helping everyone stay safe on Britain’s roads.

Business challenge

Digital transformation is driving the distribution of services and controls closer to customers, employees, partners and ecosystems worldwide, in government as well as in business. With the goal of improving efficiency, adding flexibility and gaining value for money, the UK government is undertaking a digital transformation. Like other government agencies, DVSA is transitioning away from long-term contracts, minimizing vendor lock-in and moving to open source and cloud where possible—making fast, reliable connectivity essential.

Tim Hinchey, Head of Cloud and Infrastructure Architecture at DVSA, explained the challenge: “We were connecting to the cloud via virtual private networks (VPNs), but our VPN firewall ran out of capacity, so we needed another solution.”



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“ECX Fabric gives us the flexibility to scale up and out as much as we want and whenever we need. We can jump from cloud vendor to cloud vendor whenever we please, from a network connectivity perspective!”

Tim Hinchey, Head of Cloud and Infrastructure Architecture, DVSA

Solution

To meet this need for connectivity, DVSA selected Equinix Cloud Exchange Fabric, which directly, securely and dynamically connects distributed infrastructure and digital ecosystems globally on Platform Equinix® via software-defined interconnection. Available across more than 30 Equinix International Business Exchange™ (IBX®) data center locations, ECX Fabric is designed for rapid scalability, real-time agility and customized connectivity through a self-service portal or API.

Because every major cloud and IT service provider has a presence in IBX data centers, DVSA can easily connect staff to Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure and other cloud providers via Equinix Fiber Connects. Switching from one cloud provider to another to save costs or enable additional services takes only minutes. In addition, DVSA’s cloud connections run via its own MPLS network, without crossing the public internet, bringing its services and controls closer to citizens, employees and partners at the digital edge.

Hinchey said, “We’re moving a lot of services. For example, our MOT testing service has around 40 million transactions annually, and five years ago all the hardware was co-located in data centers that we had to maintain ourselves. Now it’s all in the public cloud, on AWS, so this saves us time and money.”

Value realized

By adopting an Interconnection Oriented Architecture® (IOA®) strategy, DVSA has cut latency by two-thirds, giving its staff fast, responsive access to cloud-based platforms. DVSA hopes to include cloud-based applications, such as Office 365 and ServiceNow, soon.

“DVSA’s digital, data and technology vision is to ‘become a digitally enabled organization’ by providing modern, efficient and sustainable technology to support our mobile workforce and build brilliant digital services for our users. So there’s a massive digital transformation going on within the agency currently. We’ve got over 500 applications we want to move into public cloud,” said Hinchey. “We’ve taken an interconnection-first approach, and that’s put the foundation in place to handle whatever comes up.

“It’s fully automated, so as we add new areas in the cloud, they’re available everywhere on our network, to all staff, within seconds,” said Hinchey. “It used to take us four or five months to procure and provision a new connection. Now we can get it done within an hour if needed.”

Key take-aways

“Equinix Cloud Exchange Fabric has delivered exactly what was sold to us,” said Hinchey. “It’s been completely robust, easy to manage, and the Equinix support is very good.”

For the future, DVSA hopes to cross connect directly to other government agencies using ECX Fabric to make data sharing and connectivity easier. It also plans to take more advantage of the connectivity it already has, for example, to apply further analytics and machine learning to the data within its MOT service.

About DVSA

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is an executive agency of the UK government’s Department for Transport. DVSA carries out 1.9 million driving tests a year, regulates 40,000 driving instructors and 38,000 MOT garages. It also carries out 1 million annual tests to make sure lorries, buses and coaches are safe to drive, and 278,000 roadside checks on drivers and vehicles, and monitors vehicle recalls.

[DVSA.gov.uk](https://www.dvsa.gov.uk)

About Equinix

Equinix, Inc. (Nasdaq: EQIX) connects the world’s leading businesses to their customers, employees and partners inside the most-interconnected data centers. On this global platform for digital business, companies come together across more than 50 markets on five continents to reach everywhere, interconnect everyone and integrate everything they need to create their digital futures.

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