



Black Box Delivers IT Infrastructure for Office Depot's Digital Innovation Center in the United Kingdom

- **Industry:** Retail
- **Client:** Office Depot
- **Region:** United Kingdom
- **Solution:** Network Infrastructure
- **Products:** Installation and commissioning of a CAT6 UTP LSZH and OM3 network infrastructure

Office DEPOT®

BACKGROUND

Office Depot is one of the world's largest suppliers of workplace solutions. In Europe the company operates in 13 countries through its two main brands Office Depot and Viking. Office Depot provides business supplies and services to help its customers work better and more productive. Office Depot set plans in place to accelerate their eCommerce strategy and build a Digital Innovation Center in Milton Keynes, United Kingdom.

THE CHALLENGE

Office Depot processes thousands of orders on a daily basis. Orders are received online, over the phone and in person. Their online customers demand a responsive framework where they can engage irrespective of device. To support the eCommerce strategy, Office Depot has to recruit and retain the best digital professionals in the industry. It was essential that the new Digital Innovation Centre was designed to provide an environment that would foster innovation, encourage collaboration and also be a great place to work.

THE SOLUTION

The success of the center was going to be reliant on a fast, robust and reliable IT infrastructure. Office Depot called on Black Box Network Services. Philip Howson, UK & Ireland IT Service Delivery Coordinator for Office Depot was involved with the project from day one. "Our partnership with Black Box dates back to 2005 when

they did the cabling infrastructure for Office Depot's Manchester site. They have been our preferred supplier for network cabling since then. Black Box has always provided a quality service at a competitive price, so they were our natural choice for the Milton Keynes Digital Innovation Center."

Construction took place over a number of phases. Black Box began on the second floor which is the main Building Distributor (BD). The area was flood wired with GigaTrue Class E/CAT6 550MHz UTP LSZH (Low Smoke Zero Halogen) cabling to the command center, workstations, hot desks, offices, conference and meeting rooms, telephone booths, the resource center, and the games area. Cabling routes were both low level to floor boxes, and high level to outlets for IP cameras, TVs and Wi-Fi access points. A 12-core OM3 fiber backbone was installed to link the main BD to a Floor Distributor (FD) on the third level. The work area outlets on the third floor were cabled in Class E/CAT6 LSZH from the FD. Black Box provided the full panel-to-port installation, which included two 42U 800 x 800 open rack patching frames. 10% extra capacity was built into the network design to accommodate future expansion.

RESULTS

The Digital Innovation Centre began life as a blank canvas over two floors of a 5-storey, multi-tenant building. Access to floors two and three could only be achieved via the service elevator to avoid disturbing the other companies in the building. A huge amount of materials and manpower were required to achieve the desired office space. There were teams of workers from all sectors of the construction industry. Black Box engineers worked in sync with the other trades to get the work done to the high specification. The network infrastructure on the second floor was completed ahead of schedule. Office Depot staff were able to move in while the third floor was still a 'work in progress'. Black Box completed the third floor in a live network environment and again ahead of plan. The whole project took only 6 months from conception to completion. Black Box's contribution took less than 3 weeks. The result is a workspace Office Depot can be proud of. It is their largest eCommerce transformation in Europe, and it provides an environment that exceeds the expectations of the new millennium workforce.