

# STIGROUP

## COLOCATION, CROSS CONNECTS, OCX



Rapidly growing managed security provider partners with CoreSite to improve network stability, increase marketing opportunities, and reduce operating costs by 35%.

# PROTECT THIS HOUSE

## THE CHALLENGE

### Warding off disaster, one threat at a time

Cybersecurity is on everyone's mind these days. Organizations large and small around the world must contend with a rapidly growing number of existential threats from both human and natural sources. As hackers ramp up their attacks and Mother Nature increases the severity of hers, an increasing number of businesses are turning to experts like STIGroup to protect them from immediate security threats and position them to ward off future ones.

For nearly two decades, the firm has been a go-to resource for managed security services, cybersecurity consulting, and security systems integration for midsize and large enterprises. But delivering on that expertise requires a stable, expansive network of partners—particularly data center service providers.

*"Effective security goes well beyond just setting up firewalls and antivirus protection. It also means having a safe, secure, and impenetrable physical location for housing critical infrastructure and systems,"* says David Gordon, President at STIGroup. *"We're always aware just how important availability and redundancy are to protecting our customers' businesses. So we decided to re-examine our data center network and increase our presence in more modern, stable facilities with the infrastructure we need to serve all our customers' needs."*

### Seeking a new home with modern amenities and infrastructure

Prompted by a long-time customer who wanted to move its headquarters, STIGroup recognized the significant advantages of collocating the customer's critical systems versus having the client to continue to host them on-premises, but needed a partner to provide the service.

*"From cost management, service level guarantee, and security perspective colocation is the smart business play,"* says Nihir Jariwala, Director of Technology Platforms and Operations, STIGroup. *"However, not every data center provider is equipped to provide next-generation facilities we need with a full complement of amenities, and secure physical infrastructure at a reasonable price."*

While cost control and security are important aspects of an ideal colocation facility, Gordon notes that service availability and network uptime are essential to making colocation make sense.

*"It's awfully difficult to maintain a business's health when networks go down or when the entire building goes offline,"* Gordon says. *"When you're using a data center to support managed security, you're doing it for multiple clients. A single outage can impact the availability of critical systems for dozens of customers, which would be disastrous for them and for us."*

Jariwala points out that one of the biggest challenges in building a data center partner network is effectively planning for disaster recovery. He cites the economic impact of Hurricane Sandy in 2012—which caused billions of dollars in property damage and took tens of thousands of businesses offline—as a motivator for making it a top priority to find a partner with fortified buildings and redundant network connectivity.

*"Many data centers had their generators and fuel supplies cut off during the hurricane, crippling every business located there and amplifying the devastation of the storm,"* he says. *"That became our new minimum standard for resilience and completely altered the parameters of our data center search."*



*"The relationship with CoreSite has changed our scale exponentially. We've gone from being a relatively small managed services provider to being scalable. We've been able to deliver on significantly more and larger projects."*

**David Gordon, President at STIGroup**

## THE SOLUTION

### Hitting the reset button

Sensing an opportunity to re-establish its East Coast base of data center operations in a more stable, sustainable environment and better position the business for future growth, Jariwala began researching colocation options.

Specifically, he was looking for a data center provider with efficient and reliable power sources, high service levels, and the professional credentials required of many of STIGroup's customers. His search led him to CoreSite, which featured the "hyper-ready" colocation facilities—modern amenities, convenient locations, and reinforced physical infrastructure—that the company had hoped to find.

In particular, they liked that CoreSite's NY2 data center is close to mass transit and offers comfortable, pre-wired office spaces that make it easy for STIGroup consultants to maintain an on-site presence and directly monitor customer environments. In addition, CoreSite's 100% uptime service levels and ISO, PCI, and HIPAA compliance certifications satisfy the most critical elements of the company's requirements and improved its value proposition to prospective customers.

*"CoreSite offered everything we were looking for and checked every box on our list of criteria," Jariwala says. "Beyond just facilities designed to withstand natural disasters, CoreSite data centers provide the flexibility to easily tie on-prem deployments into a range of private and public clouds and the elasticity to scale to meet virtually any business demand at an overall lower total cost of ownership than other providers."*

Gordon says that with aggressive plans for STIGroup's overall growth and development, CoreSite's Open Cloud Exchange®, the customer-only marketplace intended to easily connect with prospective customers and partners, was another critical factor in STIGroup's decision to select CoreSite over other partners.

*"CoreSite's Open Cloud Exchange is a massive value-add which creates many opportunities for building new relationships without the time and expense of conventional sales and marketing," he says. "It puts us right in the middle of a vibrant community of like-minded organizations that can help us extend the scope and reach of our services. It's hard to quantify just how valuable that is to a growing business."*

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND BENEFITS

### More than just a building

Partnering with CoreSite has proven to be a significant advantage for STIGroup. CoreSite provides the solid foundation that the business needs to execute, as well as a host of new opportunities to grow.

*"Moving our first customer over to CoreSite was completely seamless and proved we could deliver on our promises, which made convincing other customers to migrate much easier," Jariwala says. "And since relocating, we've reduced our operating costs by up to 35% while increasing service quality, proving CoreSite can deliver on their promise too."*

Part of the CoreSite promise is to deliver an exceptional experience for both STIGroup and its customers beyond just reliable services. According to Gordon, partnering with CoreSite has already helped his business grow by introducing STIGroup to new opportunities the company may have otherwise missed. *"The relationship with CoreSite has changed our scale exponentially," he says. "We've gone from being a relatively small managed services provider to being scalable. We've been able to deliver on significantly more and larger projects."*

Gordon also says that the relationship has cemented STIGroup's vision for the future, knowing that he'll have an open and direct line of communication with CoreSite leaders and key personnel to foster a long-term partner relationship focused on innovation rather than a transactional customer-vendor arrangement.

*"In the colocation game, the biggest challenge is differentiating a service that's been commoditized," Gordon says. "One of the best things about working with CoreSite is how responsive the leadership is to new ideas and putting their partners in a position to succeed. I feel comfortable that, if needed, the CoreSite CEO and the entire executive team would engage to ensure success."*

### Opening new doors

Both Jariwala and Gordon say the relationship STIGroup has developed with CoreSite is an important pivot point for the industry as a whole because it represents an evolution of the conventional vendor/customer arrangement.

*"After migrating our first customer, we were immediately able to bring along another high-profile customer on the strength of CoreSite's predictable cost models and easy access to private clouds with AWS Direct Connect," Jariwala says. "It is a testament to CoreSite's ability to adapt its solutions to help us meet our growth plans both now and for the future."*

Gordon goes a step further, suggesting that the relationship is an ideal opportunity for co-marketing strategies that will strongly benefit both organizations for years to come.

*"I think we've really just scratched the surface as to what's possible with a partnership like this," he says. "We already have strategic partners in VMWare and AWS that align perfectly with CoreSite's AWS Direct Connect to help us enable customers to migrate their workloads to the cloud. This confluence opens so many doors for combining colocation and managed security services into a single solution that both companies can market, creating a strategic competitive advantage."*

## STIGROUP CASE STUDY AT A GLANCE

### Challenge

- Secure colocation space for customers in a high-density disaster-proof data center
- Reduce operating expenses while improving network and resource availability
- Strengthen relationships with colocation providers to uncover marketing opportunities and generate new revenue streams

### Solution

STIGroup is using CoreSite colocation, cross connects, and Open Cloud Exchange® to provide its customers with a secure, scalable, and stable colocation solution to power existing business operations and provide ample opportunity for future growth.

### Results

- Reduced data center operating costs by up to 35% moving into a more modern facility with ample power, cooling, and density
- Improved reliability and 100% uptime to protect against outages or other interruptions
- Increased on-site presence by selecting a location with easy access to public transit and on-premises office space



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**Nihir Jariwala, Director of Technology Platforms and Operations, STIGroup**



### ABOUT STIGroup

PEOPLE | PROCESS | TECHNOLOGY

Founded in 2000, Secure Technology Integration Group, Ltd. (STIGroup) is an innovative firm that provides cybersecurity consulting, secure IT engineering, managed security services, and human capital solutions. STIGroup delivers the people, process and technology that enable our client’s cybersecurity programs.



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