

## **Interactive goes 100 percent green energy: world first?**

**URL:** <http://www.itwire.com/content/view/21734/1176/>

by Stephen Withers

Monday, 17 November 2008

### **Hosting and disaster recovery provider Interactive has today switched to exclusively green power for its operations, and officially opened its new Melbourne facility.**

The IT industry is responsible for an estimated two percent of the world's CO2 emissions, about the same as the airline industry.

Managing director Christopher Ride said Interactive's move to 100 percent green power was motivated by the company's responsibility to future generations. "We're going to make a stand when it comes to green," he said, noting that "it's not cheaper."

However, he did note energy provider AGL's \$A2 billion investment in renewable power generation, and that Interactive had a good deal with AGL.

"This is the proudest day in my business life," said Ride.

Company officials quoted Gartner senior analyst Rakesh Kumar as saying in September that "In our research we have not found a data centre provider running their entire operation from 100 percent renewable energy sources."

Interactive expects to spend around \$A900,000 on green power this year.

How can Interactive compete when it is paying more for power?

According to Ride, Australia can compete internationally by taking advantage of smart systems and smart people, and charging top dollar for excellent service.

"We will be smart and we will be focussed," he promised, pointing out that the company is already successfully competing with some of the giants of the IT world.

The switchover coincided with the official opening of Interactive's new Melbourne facility by Senator Stephen Conroy, the federal Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, who described the company's switch to green power as "a fantastic story."

"Reliability is an essential part of any system, and with more mission-critical systems now based on digital networks, Interactive is providing a vital support mechanism," said Conroy.

"The official launch of this new, world-class data and operations centre in Melbourne, is testament to the success Interactive is building for itself in the market."

Conroy cut two ribbons as part of the ceremony - one white, for the new centre, and one green to mark the adoption of 100 percent green power.

Interactive's Port Melbourne facility is the latest link in the company's chain of data centres in most mainland capital cities that provide disaster recovery (DR) capabilities to clients in a variety of industries.

In addition to backup data centre and hosting operations, the building incorporates 200 seats that can be configured for any particular client's requirements in a matter of minutes, including PABX setup for call centre use, explained Chris Kelly, general manager, service delivery. (16 of the seats are dedicated to one client.)

This means a call centre or other operation can be up and running by the time the client's staff arrive at the premises.

While there's typically at least one client testing or configuring its DR/BC setup on any business day, there have been just 10 occasions during the last 20 years that an Interactive client has had to put those processes into action, Kelly said.

These facilities are backed by diverse communications links, a dedicated power substation, UPSes for all equipment, and dual 1000kVA diesel generators capable of supplying the entire building for more than 24 hours without refuelling.

The company also operates a hardware maintenance service backed by an impressive stock of spare parts and modules from complete servers down. Kelly explained that Interactive does not impose artificial 'end of service life' rules, and continues to fix customers' equipment as long as it can obtain spare parts.

Furthermore, the spares inventory is managed on a city-by-city basis to allow faster response, whereas many of its larger competitors keep their stock at national or even regional centres, said Kelly.