



Uptime is in the house!

Eaton UPS Services ensures ongoing availability for ColoHouse

Location:

Miami, Fla.

Segment:

Colocation

Problem:

Pledging to deliver continuous, clean power to all of its customers is no easy feat, considering the organization's location in storm-plagued Miami.

Solution:

Eaton field services, 9395 and 9390 UPSs, PDUs and RPPs

Results:

Thanks to regular scheduled preventive maintenance from Eaton, ColoHouse ensures all of its power protection equipment always performs optimally, enabling the organization to deliver 100% uptime to its customers.

"We are running critical infrastructure for our clients, and a loss of power for even one second could be catastrophic."

Paul Bint, CEO and president

Background

Since 2007, ColoHouse has been providing clients with reliable, secure, carrier-neutral data center services designed to foster business continuity. The foundation of the company's colocation model is to deliver quality, always-on infrastructure and the most responsive support available. The success of this commitment has been demonstrated repeatedly; when surveyed year after year, ColoHouse customers cite reliability as the primary reason they recommend the firm.

Challenge

Currently partnering with approximately 500 clients, ColoHouse maintains more than 10,000 servers within its dual Miami data centers—MI1 and MI2—the majority of which are essential to customer operations. "We are running critical infrastructure for our clients, and a loss of power for even one second could be catastrophic," emphasizes Paul Bint, ColoHouse CEO and president.

Since opening its doors, the organization has relied on a comprehensive Eaton® power protection solution to ensure continuous uptime and high availability—no small feat considering that Miami is constantly pummeled by lightning, hurricanes and

electrical storms. "We can go day after day with the city of Miami losing power," Bint says. "The power backup that we provide is absolutely the most critical reason our customers buy from us. We've had constant power here for more than 11 years without any problem or interruption."

That impressive statistic can be attributed not just to the high quality of ColoHouse's uninterruptible power systems (UPSs) and related power protection devices, but to the ongoing care and maintenance of that equipment. "We have complete trust in our Eaton equipment, but anything that has mechanical parts could break if it's not being serviced properly," Bint acknowledges. "We engage in preventive maintenance to safeguard against that happening."



Powering Business Worldwide

Solution

While ColoHouse's MI1 data center boasts one of the largest Eaton 9390 UPS parallel systems in the U.S. with five modules, its MI2 data center is safeguarded by a Power Xpert 9395 UPS. Both facilities also feature multiple Eaton power distribution units (PDUs) and remote power panels (RPPs). Ongoing, optimal performance for the entire slew of power protection equipment is ensured through regular care and maintenance from Eaton field services.

During the event, the data center is placed on generator power to bypass the UPS system completely, allowing Eaton CSEs to complete physical inspections, perform system checks, and rebalance and redistribute loads. Generally requiring an eight-hour span, the service could leave the facility vulnerable if every scenario is not carefully considered and all precautions taken. For that reason, Pistoria comes on site to lead a comprehensive safety and planning meeting with the entire ColoHouse team prior to each scheduled maintenance.



Eaton Power Xpert 9395 UPS



Eaton 9390 UPS



Service technician



Eaton PDU



Eaton RPP

The colocation organization's preventive maintenance (PM) schedule is split into three distinct parts, with battery cabinets inspected twice a year; comprehensive quarterly maintenance completed three times per year with the UPSs remaining operational; and one major annual maintenance when the UPSs are taken offline.

During the three quarterly service calls when the UPSs stay online, Eaton technicians use infrared scanning and other equipment to detect any potential problems, as well as conduct a variety of monitoring tests. All PDUs and RPPs are also closely inspected. Similarly, during semi-annual routine battery maintenance, every string within each cabinet is carefully examined and assessed. "Having battery maintenance twice a year will show us if any cells are starting to go bad," Bint explains. "And Eaton will recommend if there are any strings that need to be replaced."

But it is during the annual service call when the UPSs are removed from connected equipment that the most precarious procedure occurs. Bint credits Monty Pistoria, Eaton senior technologist and the lead field technician assigned to ColoHouse, with always ensuring that the complicated and highly critical effort goes off without a hitch.

"We all sit in a conference room to make sure that we know who's doing what and most importantly, how long it will take the technicians to back out of the process if we come up against a problem," Bint explains. "This backup plan is critical. We need to understand what would happen if we encountered an unexpected problem—if there was an issue with our generator, for example, or if the utility power went out. We need to know how long it would be before we could restore the UPS."

"The method of the procedure is very important, as is ensuring that we're all on the same page," confirms Pistoria, who has overseen ColoHouse's power protection solution since it was first installed. "And because they have to schedule their PMs at least three weeks in advance, it is critical that we make those dates. In all of these years, we have never missed a date."

Another concern during the offline service is making sure that the heat doesn't rise to a dangerous level within the data center, as ColoHouse reduces air conditioning usage while on generator power. "Every 15 minutes, they're taking temperature readings in there," Bint says.

Following the offline UPS service in MI1, the exact same process is completed in the organization's second data center on a different

day. Through every step of the procedures, Bint says the Eaton team is committed to both speed and accuracy. "Last time, we got the entire service completed in five hours, instead of the allotted eight," Pistoria says. "They were very appreciative."

Indeed, Bint offers the highest praise to Pistoria and the four other local Eaton field technicians who support the site, noting that the unparalleled level of uptime they help to ensure is required for its customers to avoid potential disaster. For example, one of ColoHouse's clients, Avast Antivirus, operates anti-virus software scanning for all of South America from the Miami data center. "If we went down, they wouldn't be able to be out scouring laptops and PCs," Bint points out. "Another customer, IP-COM, does voice-over-IP and their customers wouldn't be able to make phone calls if we lost power."

Above all else, ColoHouse values the peace of mind that comes from contracting for UPS service with the original equipment manufacturer. Not to mention the slew of additional benefits—such as the exceptional level of expertise and knowledge displayed by Eaton field technicians, which can be attributed in part to the company's commitment to provide them with regular, ongoing training. Technicians also have access to the proprietary firmware and spare parts necessary to ensure optimal product care. Eaton's dedication to unparalleled service is further exemplified by the organization's exceptional safety record.

In fact, Bint credits the Eaton service team for ColoHouse's ability to maintain 100 percent uptime. "If there's even the vague possibility of something being not quite right, we replace it proactively," he reveals. "Monty gets on me if I try to cut any corners, because he knows the system so well. It's wonderful that our tech team doesn't have to be power experts, because we can leave that to Monty and Eaton."

It is a formula that has proven successful for ColoHouse over the years. Notes Pistoria, "Their critical load power has never been lost due to an Eaton system malfunction."

"What I love about Eaton is the proactivity of everything they do," adds Bint. "They let us know when it's time to schedule a PM and Monty always makes sure they occur on time."

Sometimes it's the little things that mean a lot, according to Bint, such as returning phone calls promptly. "If we ever have a question, I guarantee that Monty or our other Eaton field technicians will always call back the same day. Our techs love that, so they don't have to spend a lot of time chasing people down."

On a similar note, Bint commends Eaton for being extremely quick to provide the company with detailed reports following every service call. "With some of our other manufacturers, we have to beg for those reports!" he notes.

Results

With its entire power protection infrastructure safeguarded by an Eaton service plan, ColoHouse is able to focus on what matters most—its core business—as opposed to worrying about downtime. Thanks to Eaton UPS Services, the colocation provider can:

- Have confidence that its entire power protection solution will perform optimally at all times
- Replace aging batteries before they become a threat to downtime
- Ensure PDUs and RPPs remain up and running continuously
- Rest easy knowing Eaton keeps a constant pulse on its data center solution

**To learn more, call Mark Ryan
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