

## CUSTOMER STORIES

## ROOM TO GROW



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David Symes,  
Data Centre Manager, Telefónica UK



*Telefonica*

O<sub>2</sub>

**We created a custom-built new home for Telefónica UK’s (O2) London switching centre. Delivered flawlessly in just nine months, our BT Locate solution gives the leading digital communications company room to grow.**

O2 is one of the UK’s largest providers of mobile telecoms services to consumers and businesses. Today it serves more than 24 million customers on its mobile networks.

In a competitive and crowded market space, O2 has grown by keeping its customers happy. “We want O2 to be known as a quality product. That means we have to deliver great customer experiences,” explains David Symes, Telefónica UK’s Data Centre Manager.

### Time to switch

Switching plays a critical role providing the network quality expected by O2’s customers: it’s the key to delivering a reliable and consistent service. Today, the operator has six main switching centres to handle voice and data traffic generated by millions of customers.

Telefónica UK’s central London switching centre had operated in the city’s Vauxhall district for almost three decades. Located in BT’s Keybridge House, the centre had grown to host over 7000 circuits by 2012. But with Keybridge House facing demolition as part of an urban regeneration programme, David Symes was tasked with finding a new home for the facility.

## The brief

Any new location for the switching centre would have to satisfy a number of key requirements. First, it would have to be resilient, offering failsafe backup facilities for power and cooling. David Symes was looking for N+1 redundancy, a safeguard that ensures an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) is always available.

The location would have to be secure: Telefónica UK needed to be sure that mission-critical systems and data would be safeguarded.

Geography was a vital factor: the new switching centre would need to be within cable distance to move the circuits. In effect, this meant a central London location.

Finally, timing was critical: Telefónica UK wanted to migrate operations to the new switching centre in just nine months. Everything from planning through installation, testing and switch-over would have to be accomplished in this time – and with no impact on its customers.

As David Symes notes, the stakes were high: “We knew there was a lot of risk around migration. Everything’s got to be in place when you make the move. The new environment’s got to be perfect.”

## Welcome home: BT Locate at the Faraday Building

In all, David Symes considered fifteen sites around London before opting for a BT Wholesale Locate co-location solution at BT’s Faraday Building.

A landmark in Britain’s telecommunications history, the Faraday Building opened in 1902 in the heart of the City as London’s first purpose-built telephone exchange. In 1933 it became the country’s first international exchange.

Today, the Faraday Building remains a prime address and a home for cutting edge technology. The BT Wholesale-Locate team has built a bespoke switching environment for Telefónica UK on

Faraday’s fourth and fifth floors, designed to meet all the operator’s requirements.

Resilience is a vital feature of the location: continuity of power supply is assured by two sets of diesel-powered back-up generators and transformers buried in Faraday’s basement.

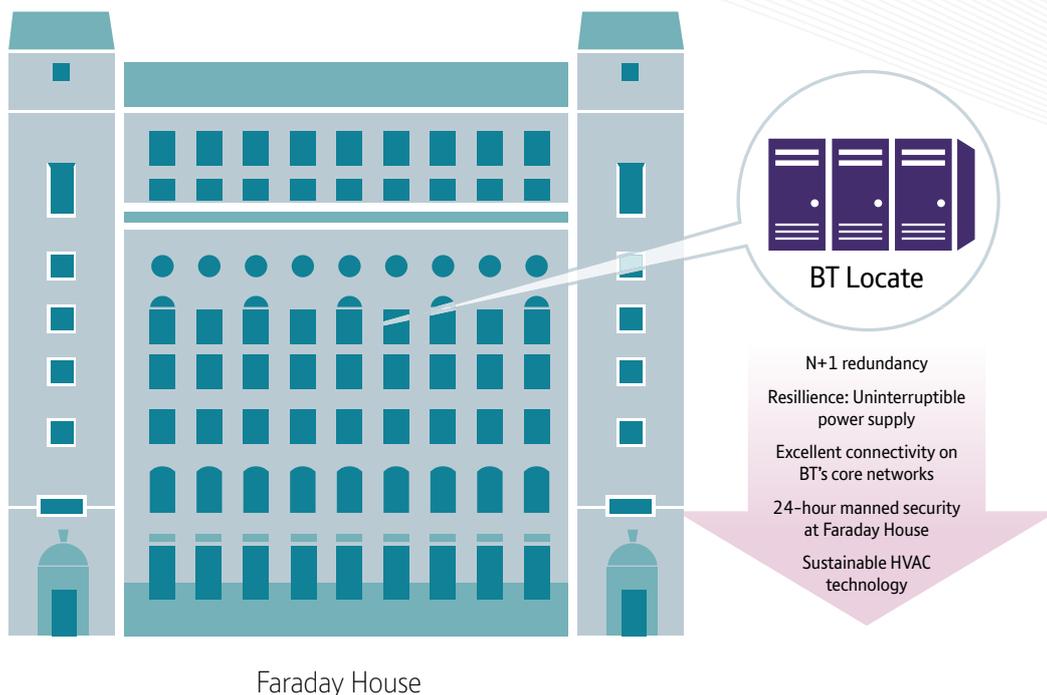
A key BT location, Faraday House sits on top of BT’s core networks. This excellent connectivity means Telefónica UK does not have to invest in expensive access circuits. Installing IP Exchange, for example, just meant running a cable between two floors. And, as a BT exchange and head office site, the Faraday Building is in everyday use with 24-hour manned security.

David Symes comments: “Usually we would build a new switching centre from scratch. But with BT Locate at the Faraday Building we get that here. Why build on green field sites when you can re-use a building like BT Faraday to make a home for the latest technology? This location is built for future.”

It’s also a good fit with Telefónica UK’s sustainability strategy: a new location in a re-used building and new switching and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) technology that’s more efficient and helps the telecoms group meet its targets on energy use.

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David Symes,  
Data Centre Manager, Telefónica UK



## The right move

David Symes gives a positive verdict on the process of moving in to the Faraday Building: “The BT Wholesale–Locate team helped us a lot on the migration and the delivery was perfect. We had really tight timelines which couldn’t move and BT delivered against those timelines, without outages and without impacting our customers.”

The migration experience and the switching centre’s subsequent performance gave Telefónica UK the confidence to take more co-location space from BT Wholesale. “The Faraday Building location has proven to be robust. We leapt at the chance to take more capacity from BT Wholesale–Locate when it became available.”

## Space for the future

Stephen Bryan, Sales Business Manager at BT Wholesale, says: “Working with Telefónica’s brief we completely transformed the space at Faraday House to create a unique environment that suits their business.”

Delivering major transformations in constrained inner-city sites is always a challenge, as Andy Woodyer, Head of BT Locate, explains: “Carrying out major works in an occupied city centre site like Faraday is complex. We were bound by many byelaws about noisy works and street closures, and we also had to consider the impact on our own people and local residents. Our ability to deliver complex co-location projects in all kinds of environments means we can build customers like Telefónica UK sturdy foundations for their business needs.”

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David Symes,  
Data Centre Manager, Telefónica UK

For David Symes, those business needs are constantly shifting. O2’s customers find new ways to use mobile services – and above all, mobile data – all the time. And data volumes will continue to soar: its central role in the government’s smart metering initiative will drive more growth.

With its Faraday Building location, Telefónica UK is strategically placed to handle change. Noting the direct connects into BT’s core networks and connectivity to hundreds of other providers available at BT Faraday, David Symes comments: “There are opportunities just by being here. BT Wholesale has a wealth of knowledge. The engineering teams have great technical know-how and they know our business really well.”

But the main driver for Telefónica UK’s presence at the Faraday Building is the end customer: the people who receive the service and pay the bills. “We see moving here as investment in our customers and the quality of the customer experiences. BT Wholesale has given us a custom-built environment that suits our business now and will handle any new requirements we can see on the horizon for the next five years.”

## Solution overview

**Telefónica UK is using BT Locate, part of the portfolio of BT Location Services for flexible, safe and secure local data and switching centre solutions.**

- Flexible: we offer solutions for customers of all sizes: from single racks to full data-centres. We blend expertise, space, design and build with security, resilience and cost savings – and a wide choice of locations and facilities.
- Unrivalled potential locations: with some 5000 operational buildings and 247 radio towers across the UK, we can locate you anywhere from a city centre to a remote hilltop.
- Safe and secure: BT Locate data suites have 24x7 monitoring and Uptime Institute Tier 3 Resiliency features, including uninterruptable power supply (UPS) and redundancy.



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