Best Datacenter Provider to the Sell Side

Australian Securities Exchange

By winning the best data center provider category in the Sell-Side Technology Awards 2015, the Sydney-based Australian Liquidity Centre (ALC), part of the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX), created history by becoming the first southern hemisphere-based firm to have won a *Waters* award … ever. Given that two of the biggest names in this space—NYSE Technologies and Nasdaq—won this category in 2013 and 2014, respectively, the award going Down Under is sure to raise some eyebrows.

As noted in the write-up of last year's best data center provider category, there is something of an arms race underway in the data center industry that requires contenders to do one of two things: either build state-of-the-art facilities or retrofit current data centers to attract capital markets clients. The ASX opted for the former strategy when it built the Gore Hill, Sydney-based ALC, which it opened in February 2012.

"The ALC has become the heart of Australia's financial markets community," explains says David Raper, general manager, trading services at the ASX. "There are over 100 customers co-located in the ALC and more than 200 financial market specialists from across the globe connected via the ASX's network. It's the strength of the ALC's financial ecosystem, which really sets us apart in our region."

The ALC, the only purpose-built financial markets data center in Australia, houses both the ASX Trade and ASX Trade24 matching engines. Like all competent data centers, it offers co-location services for clients' trading applications and algorithms, adjacent to the ASX matching engines, ensuring that they receive the fastest possible access to ASX market data and all ASX markets, while minimal latency is added to orders between executions and fills, a prerequisite for high-speed and high-frequency trading (HFT) strategies. Significantly, the ALC guarantees that each customer's matching engine connection uses the same length cable, ensuring a level playing field in the highly competitive HFT space.

The ALC is carrier-neutral—firms may opt to use their preferred telecoms carrier to connect to external sites, although they also have the option of connecting to ASX Net and ASX Net Global, the ASX's own low-latency networks. On the security and resiliency fronts, the ALC features 24/7 onsite security with biometric access, cameras monitoring all access points and every row (rack) of the facility, and electronic locks fitted to all cabinets. It also features an uninterrupted power supply with the DRUPS (Diesel Rotary Uninterruptible Power Supply) system, while all power systems are monitored and tested on site and remotely.

— *VBA*

Cynthia Tazioli and Gerry Cooney

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