Sparkle

MOST PROMISING
DATA CENTER
SOLUTION PROVIDERS
2020

Awarded by **CIO**Review

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The annual listing of 20 companies that are at the forefront of providing Data Center solutions and transforming businesses

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Where Communications Meets Modernization and Caring for the Environment

Modern data centers are undoubtedly wonders of computing technology. They feature state-of-the-art high-density servers and revolutionary cooling systems alongside a wide range of services targeted towards an array of companies that demand infrastructure resources. The new generation of data centers are capable of leveraging advancing technologies such as IoT, 5G, AI and cloud computing to help companies push their business forward in an affordable manner. Pioneering in offer such data centers is Sparkle, a leading global telecommunication service provider offering a complete range of IP, data, cloud, data center, mobile, and voice solutions.

Founded in 2003 and owned by TIM Group, Sparkle is known worldwide for telecommunication services (wholesale voice and mobile), transport services (capacity, IP, and solutions for corporate customers) and its massive global fiber network. Sparkle's history in developing its specific data center positioning has been proven effective in creating a winning neutral approach for its customers. The company's data centers are built across the landing stations of owned submarine cables. Athens and Istanbul were the first, Miami and Sicily followed soon. They were the first real "landing hubs" where customers could build their network node just across the landing. Neutrality is what distinguishes Sparkle's data centers proposition: carriers and providers can set their nodes there and sell their products with no restriction. "This approach was very effective and highly appreciated by customers and several ISPs, OTTs, content and CDN providers decided to build a node within Sparkle Data Centers to interconnect with their customers and partners directly", says Mario Di Mauro, CEO of Sparkle.

Today, Sparkle is working toward establishing itself as a digital service company, leveraging on its positioning on traditional services as well as on data center services and cloud offering developed and enriched in the last ten years. This has helped the company in creating value-added services on top of traditional communication services and value for customers. Sparkle's data centers are an innovative and complete market place where customers can satisfy all their needs in terms of connectivity (local or global), hosting for their applications via a dedicated cloud local environment or directly connected to all major public cloud players, security services and get all the requested applications employing customized solutions or automation. The company's data center environment is constantly evolving by ensuring better efficiency, automation and security through innovative approaches like IOT and augmented reality.

Sparkle has adopted user-friendly tools and procedures accessible directly from a customer portal, with the annexed marketplace, where customers can purchase what they need for their business—these range from basic support and cablings up to capacity and bandwidth on demand. Furthermore, the company provides a turnkey solution for virtualization, mobility, and hassle-free management of the tools. These tools range from security, IOT, video conference, traditional cloud services and so on. "Cybersecurity, IOT, data

Mario Di Mauro

monetization, communication, and collaboration solutions are just some examples of the new focuses that are integrating and giving value beyond commodity to the traditional propositions. We are ready to ride all the new hi-tech opportunities to provide customers with all the tools that can spin up our customer's business", asserts Di Mauro.

Sparkle's evolution toward a full data center solution is now completed with cloud and disaster recovery platforms, solutions for corporate customers, ISPs, integrators and so on. The operation was so successful that the company has been continuing to upgrade its data centers to satisfy the increasing demand and host more customers. In the last few years, Sparkle has enriched the adoption of adiabatic cooling and state of the art containment modules in all its data centers to help clients improve energy usage and efficiency.

"We have always ridden the wave of innovation, not only following but anticipating the changes in market trends and customer needs. We always walk aside our customers taking advantage of our experience and selecting partners who bring in new ideas and solutions. Our strength is talking and following our customers targeting their needs and not only the edge of technology", asserts Di Mauro.

With an eclectic list of achievements over half of the last century, the company has built a promising roadmap with a keen

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its traditional colocation approach by developing cloud owned proposition in the main data centers (Greece, Turkey, and Sicily) as well as by creating access points to new VAS offerings such as Cloud Connect (access to all public cloud providers all over the world) or broadcasting solutions (i.e. media hub capabilities). Most recently Sparkle started the construction of its fourth Data Center in Metamorfosis in Greece, the first green in the country and one of the most technologically advanced in Europe.

Di Mauro explains, "Data centers are becoming a place where customers can interact with the world and get applications and solutions to manage their needs, being the effective gateway between physical reality and virtual world. All the solutions developed directly by Sparkle or by its partnership ecosystem are offered through automation processes and designed to offer and implement customized solutions to serve all customers' needs". For instance, Sparkle introduced Li-ion technology or

focus on Infrastructure, which is one of its core competencies. Di Mauro highlights, "Infrastructure is one core asset in defining Sparkle's competitive advantages and one of the major priorities is to develop sustainable digital smart infrastructures. The company plans on enriching its PoPs (points of presence) with additional capabilities to offer solutions rich in all kinds of local propositions, all driven by the development of orchestrators and market places that will give customers and partners an easy way to interact with us and their services".

"We are constantly improving our technical and environmental performances with continuous upgrades. As an example, we recently improved PUE in Istanbul while adding 500KW. We are also planning to expand our colocation capabilities with new data centers in Istanbul and Genoa. Our new Data Centers all use state-of-the-art adiabatic cooling and power management schemes to increase reliability and efficiency", concludes Di Mauro. CR