

# Lincoln Electric: Welding the World Together

**LINCOLN  
ELECTRIC**

**Client:**

Lincoln Electric  
www.lincolnelectric.com

**Requirement:**

- Pan-European network connectivity
- Full redundancy
- Application hosting

**Solution:**

- NextGen Network
- Principal routers (provided and managed):  
Cisco 7200, 1721, 2621, 1841

**Why KPN International:**

- Quality of account team
- Ability to drive out cost
- Pan-European presence
- End-to-end data and voice capabilities

Lincoln Electric, founded in 1895, is the world leader in the design, development and manufacture of arc welding products, robotic welding systems and plasma cutting equipment. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., the company has a worldwide network of manufacturing plants, distributors and sales offices covering more than 160 countries.

Recognized as The Welding Experts®, the company provides leading technology products and solutions in arc welding consumables and equipment. Lincoln sustains the industry's most aggressive and comprehensive research and product development program.

Lincoln Electric's commitment to providing the most innovative, cost-effective, quality welding and cutting solutions is one that has guided the company for more than 100 years. The company's technological leadership and worldwide presence enables it to provide competent and reliable solutions for their customers.

### Current Pressures

In recent years, the Lincoln Electric Europe ICT department was strongly focused on cost reduction and quality improvement of the network and telecommunications-related services. Since the ICT project started, KPN International has been working together with the Lincoln Electric Europe ICT Team to achieve quality and cost reduction targets.

### Building the Relationship

Like many KPN International customers, Lincoln Electric is a leader in their specialty area, with a total worldwide workforce of nearly 9,000 employees and a global presence. Large scale projects require close cooperation and responsiveness from the business partners and the suppliers involved. KPN International proved to be a great partner for this project. Rafael Muntada, the ICT director at Lincoln Electric Europe, says: 'From the start, KPN International has shown exceptional responsiveness - and the relationship has developed well as a result.'



The relationship started five years ago, when KPN International replaced the incumbent, delivering communication services using its EuroRings Network and data hosting through its cyber center near Schiphol in the Netherlands.

Their strong pan-European presence was crucial: as Lincoln Electric developed business across Europe, efficiency in adding locations and capacity was essential. Today, KPN International delivers to Lincoln Electric in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the UK. As the company continues to aggregate contracts, KPN International is ready to bring new countries online.

### Scope

KPN International provides Lincoln Electric with high-availability leased lines in 15 European locations. It enables line speeds of around 2 Mbit/s with port speeds ranging from 1 - 2 Mbit/s according to customer demands. Availability is set at 99.9%. The network is wholly owned by KPN International, eliminating third party reliance.

Network speed and capacity are extended as required. At the Lincoln Electric European hub in Nijmegen, for example, KPN International delivers line speeds of 34 Mbit/s and port speeds of up to 10 Mbit/s. Lincoln Electric Europe's Hosted Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) environment is split over dual redundant Cyber Centers, some 200 kilometers apart. These Cyber Centers are operated by the leading ICT provider Getronics, which is part of KPN.

In addition to data communication and ERP hosting services, KPN International also manages the PBXs.

### Respect and Responsiveness

The cooperation between Lincoln Electric Europe and KPN International is efficient and positive for both parties, thanks in part to how KPN International organizes its account teams.

KPN Senior Account Manager Bas Kerkenaar explains: 'All our clients have highly motivated support teams. Clients can pick up the phone and talk to somebody who knows their business at any time – somebody who can make things happen fast.'

This approach is central to the way KPN International does business, and it pays dividends for all parties. Bas continues: 'It's a virtuous circle. If we can inspire trust through the quality of our performance, we can increase the range of business we do together. We aggregate contracts and this increases the client's buying power - everybody wins.'

Rafael Muntada recognizes the KPN account team quality: 'The team has shown that they really care – they know how to manage our needs.'

Lincoln Electric has recently extended its communications contract for an additional five years. This client commitment has resulted in substantial pre-agreed savings.

An independent pricing review is scheduled into the contract at 36 months. If market conditions change significantly, costs can be adjusted accordingly.

### Next Steps

Lincoln Electric Europe ICT Director Muntada is already looking ahead: 'We want to rationalize telecommunications contracts across Europe. This initiative is already underway: the more countries we involve, the better it is for everybody in terms of cost and consistency. We are also keen to exploit the convergence between voice and data communications, and KPN International seems really well positioned to help us.'

KPN International and Lincoln Electric have strong technical and business teams. Couple that with KPN International's increasing synergy with Getronics, and the future looks promising.

Sharing ideas is inseparably linked to digital communications. By delivering flexible and cost-effective digital infrastructures and services, KPN International will help Lincoln Electric take full advantage.

*'From the start, KPN International has shown exceptional responsiveness. The team has shown that they really care.'*

Rafael Muntada, ICT Director Lincoln Electric Europe

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