

# PwC Italy Deploys Simplified, Secure Network Throughout New 28-floor Tower in Just Four Days with Cisco SD-Access

PwC Italy · Industry: Professional Services · Size: 7500 employees · Location: Milan, Italy

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## Challenges

- Establish robust network for new Italian headquarters
- Increase Wi-Fi and wired visibility, security, and simplicity
- Accelerate infrastructure deployments
- Streamline network operations and troubleshooting

## Results

- Deployed two core switches, 100 edge switches, and approximately 380 access points in four days
- Increased operational efficiency and insights
- Fortified network security with group-based segmentation
- Reduced firewall and VLAN complexity

## Solutions

- Cisco® Digital Network Architecture (Cisco DNA)
- Cisco SD-Access
- Cisco DNA Center™
- Cisco DNA Analytics and Assurance
- Cisco Secure Network Analytics (formerly Stealthwatch®)
- Cisco Identity Services Engine (Cisco ISE)
- Cisco Connected Mobile Experiences (CMX)
- Cisco Catalyst 9000 Series switches
- Cisco Catalyst 9100 Access Points
- Cisco DNA Premier licensing

## For more information

- [Cisco DNA](#)
- [Cisco SD-Access](#)
- [Cisco DNA Center](#)
- [Cisco DNA Analytics and Assurance](#)
- [Cisco Secure Network Analytics](#)
- [Cisco ISE](#)
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**Mario Licenziato**

Chief Technology Officer  
PwC Italy

**Challenge: Establish robust, flexible network for new Milan tower**

Completed in 2020, the PwC Tower designed by Studio Libeskind is already one of the most recognizable buildings in the new Milan skyline. Rising 574 feet above its urban surroundings, the state-of-the-art building features 28 floors, a host of new-age technologies, and a plethora of adaptable, multipurpose spaces.

“All of our users and 99 percent of the tower’s technology systems are dependent on Wi-Fi connectivity,” says Simone Demaria, network architect and infrastructure manager at PwC Italy. “We needed a robust and highly reliable wireless network infrastructure that’s as advanced as the tower itself.”

PwC Italy chose a software-defined, intent-based network built on Cisco DNA, managed by Cisco DNA Center, and protected by a powerful combination of Cisco SD-Access, Cisco ISE, and Cisco Secure Network Analytics (formerly Stealthwatch).

“It’s different than a traditional network and the first of its kind for PwC at this scale,” says Mario Licenziato, chief technology officer at PwC Italy. “We chose Cisco DNA because it gives us the highest levels of visibility, security, and simplicity.”

## Increased visibility

Wi-Fi visibility was a key priority for the tower, which will eventually support 3000 PwC employees. According to Demaria, Cisco DNA Center provides a wealth of location, access, and user experience insights.

“We can easily monitor all of the traffic and the health of the network,” he explains. “Most importantly, we can analyze network performance from the users’ perspective, including speed of access, strength of signal, and quality of experience.”

Cisco DNA Analytics and Assurance has improved endpoint insights and troubleshooting, he adds. This not only saves time and reduces PwC Italy’s operational costs, but also provides essential insights that can be used to predict user behavior and assist first responders.

“In the event of an emergency, the authorities need to know how many people are in the building, where they are, and where they’ve been,” Demaria says. “We can use Cisco DNA Center to quickly determine Wi-Fi presence throughout the tower.”



## Stronger security

With robust security capabilities built into the tower’s network infrastructure, PwC Italy has simultaneously strengthened its security posture and streamlined its IT operations. Instead of placing firewalls within each subnet and managing complex VLAN assignments, the firm is leveraging Scalable Group Tags (SGTs) to separate its users, guests, and special endpoints like workstations, lockers, room booking systems, security cameras, and audio/visual equipment.

“In the past, we had to open a ticket and wait for the security team to review our designs and manually configure the firewalls,” Demaria explains. “Now we can manage security on our own using segmentation, which is a big advantage for both teams.”

The tower’s users, applications, and data are now protected by Cisco Secure Network Analytics and Cisco ISE through the Cisco SD-Access architecture. In addition to facilitating user authentication, the integrated solutions provide telemetry data and alerts that reveal traffic patterns, spikes, and anomalies through flow analyses, enabling PwC Italy to quickly detect and respond to malicious activity and network attacks.

“The network gives us a tremendous amount of protection,” Demaria says. “When something new connects, it is automatically placed on the guest network, which has limited access. And the network is continuously looking for anomalies that we might otherwise miss.”

## Software-defined simplicity

According to Demaria, the new network has eliminated Layer 2 architectural constraints and simplified PwC Italy's network operations.

"With a fabric approach to switching and wireless, we don't have to use Spanning Tree Protocol anymore," he says, "which helps us avoid loops, performance limitations, and troubleshooting headaches."

Slow, laborious deployments and configuration inconsistencies are also problems of the past, thanks to software-defined, policy-based automation and zero-touch provisioning.

"Using templates, we deployed two core switches, 100 edge switches, and approximately 380 Wi-Fi 6-enabled access points across all 28 floors of the tower in just four days," Demaria says. "It was a remarkably fast and easy implementation, and we plan to replicate this model for our 35 branch offices and 7500 employees in the country."

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