CASE STUDY —
HOW SMART GRID LEADER TRILLIANT WON KEY BUSINESS WITH ISO 27001 CERTIFICATION

Trilliant is a global company that helps organizations and municipalities transition to the smart grid. By working with DEKRA, Trilliant was able to certify their management system, train their employees, and win key contracts around the world.

Trilliant is a leader in delivering intelligent networks that enable organizations and municipalities to make a seamless transition to the smart grid. Through a combination of hardware, software, and services, Trilliant helps design, automate, and monitor smart grid initiatives worldwide.

Because cloud-based data interconnectivity is the heart and soul of smart grid technology — a world where sensors and smart devices "talk" to one another — cybersecurity is of vital importance.

Financial data, intellectual property, and employee details are highly sensitive information that Trilliant customers need to protect in the form of an information security management system (ISMS). Through an ISMS, cybersecurity is established through a systematic approach that focuses on controlling all processes, people, and technology that touch the data. For that reason, Trilliant turned to DEKRA Audit for help.

"Since we build global solutions, it's very important for us to have a globally relevant management system," said Prem Ranganath, Cybersecurity Vice President of Quality at Trilliant.

At the time, Trilliant was working on a government project in the U.K. involving smart-metering programs designed to create a sustainable way to switch electricity meters from analog to digital. According to Ranganath, information security during this transition was extremely critical.

"These governments are not just switching to smart meters because the technology is cool, but because it fits their long-term goal of measuring usage in a sustainable way. From the government's perspective, it is seen as part of the national infrastructure — the same as bridges and roads — so security is at the top of their lists."

To help win these projects, Trilliant sought ISO 27001 certification, the leading international standard for ISMS. The standard provides guidance for areas including documentation management and continual internal improvement. The standard is designed to address key information security protocols related to systems acquisition and maintenance, cryptology controls, third-party supplier relationships, communications security, operations security, the security of the physical environment, and more.

Ranganath said certification was an important way to build confidence — both with external customers and with employees.

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"It is important for customers to see a company making that investment and commitment to operate within a standard and being able to implement those standards," he said. "That gives them a lot of trust to say, 'Here's a company that is making investments in people, skills, and processes in an organic way.' It certainly builds a higher level of confidence."

Making the Certification Process Seamless

DEKRA Audit worked with Trilliant to provide an unbiased assessment of systems' and procedures' conformity to ISO 27001. In 2020, this resulted in Trilliant's achieving successful certification to ISO 27001 for sites in the U.K., the U.S., and Canada.

Certifications helped the company comply with legal requirements and meet the needs of customers. In addition to technical measures, ISO 27001 certification recognizes the importance of documentation associated with high-level information security management, which must consider all relevant operational risks.

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Ranganath said he was impressed how DEKRA was "extremely well-organized. Compared to the competition, the thing that caught my attention the most was how well they planned out, not just the audit plan, but building a project management system."

"There was a lot of prework that had to be done on Trilliant's side about how to build our change management system. It could have become a fragmented process, but DEKRA handled that very well. That gave me the confidence this is the company I want to work with going forward," he said.

In addition to ISO 27001, Trilliant has successfully achieved certifications in ISO 9001 (Quality Management), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management), and ISO 45001 (Occupational Health and Safety Management), all issued by DEKRA Audit. Trilliant was also able to foster internal knowledge on these topics by taking courses conducted by DEKRA Training, an Exemplar Global-certified training provider.

Even during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, DEKRA's expertise was apparent during these trainings, according to Ranganath. "DEKRA needs applause for that," he said. "As much as we can all say we're used to Zoom, the training could have been difficult, especially when you are used to working in a physical setting. The way they transitioned to the virtual format was amazing. We knew we made the right choice working with DEKRA Audit and DEKRA Training."

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