

SUCCESS STORY

3Degrees helps Akamai drive down emissions

Akamai shows that companies with smaller loads can still play a leadership role in combating climate change

Akamai Technologies, the world's largest cloud delivery platform, recently invested in an 80 megawatt wind farm in Texas. This investment is designed to match the company's aggregated energy load in Texas. The project is Seymour Hills Wind Farm, developed by Infinity Renewables and expected to come online in 2018.

This is the latest chapter in Akamai's long-term approach to decarbonizing their operations. 3Degrees (originally Origin Climate) has been working with Akamai since 2015 to build and implement a renewable energy strategy.

Laying the foundation

Our first project together laid the foundation when we worked with Akamai to analyze their worldwide energy use. Akamai's energy use is not large or concentrated, but is rather small and distributed throughout outsourced data centers, beyond their operational control. With Akamai's challenge in mind, we analyzed several alternatives including tax equity investments, virtual power purchase agreements and long-term renewable attribute purchases. We looked at environmental impacts as well as cost, benefits and risk they might entail. The Akamai team used this analysis to establish a strategy and start to engage company stakeholders.

Setting a goal

To formalize their strategy and ensure company-wide alignment, Akamai decided to set a formal renewable energy and climate goal. 3Degrees benchmarked more than 30 other companies, calculated baseline performance for key metrics, and projected those into the future, taking into account company growth estimates, the changing grid around the world, and the impact of actions Akamai could take.



AKAMAI'S GOAL:



50% renewables
by 2020



Reduce GHG
emissions below
2015 levels by 2020

OUR APPROACH:

- + Analyze worldwide energy use
- + Review renewable energy options
- + Benchmark other companies
- + Manage RFP process
- + Conduct financial analysis

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“The team from 3Degrees has been instrumental in helping us set goals, develop a strategy and implement projects. With their help we have been able to find new ways to invest in renewable energy that meet our business objectives.”

DR. NICOLA PEILL-MOELTER
*Akamai Senior Director of
Environmental Sustainability*

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In addition to the analytical work, we helped Akamai build the materials needed to educate internal stakeholders. As a result, Akamai's Board of Directors adopted a goal to power 50% of the company's global network operations with renewables by 2020, and to achieve an absolute reduction in greenhouse gas emissions over the same timeframe.

Executing the plan

With the goal in place, the company was ready to begin executing its plan. Given Akamai's load distribution and favorable development environment, the Texas power market was selected for their first procurement. 3Degrees worked with the Akamai team to develop the procurement specs and manage the RFI and RFP process, including developer interviews. We reviewed proposals, conducted financial analysis and due diligence, provided a project recommendation and assisted with developer negotiations, accounting policies and other details.

In May 2017 Akamai signed a deal to source energy from an 80 megawatt wind project in Texas. The project is slated to go online in 2018. Akamai expects to offset the energy use from their Texas cloud services operations, which are largely housed in co-location data centers. The Texas commitment represents about seven percent of Akamai's global power load. They continue to pursue other initiatives to meet their renewable energy and climate goals.



“Only recently have companies like Akamai with small, distributed loads been able to make a meaningful impact on decarbonizing operations that go beyond purchasing unbundled renewable energy credits. We believe this can be a model for others and we're excited to help lead the way.”

JIM BENSON
Akamai EVP and CFO

3Degrees works with organizations to build and implement customized renewable energy and carbon mitigation strategies. As a B Corp, the 3Degrees team aims to fulfill the vision of “people using business as a force for good” and prides itself on being the honest and trusted voice in helping clients deploy successful strategies to fight climate change.

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