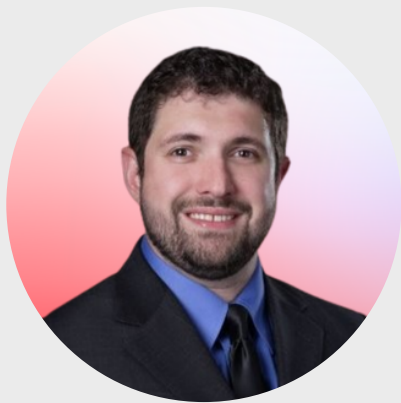


ASK THE EXPERT

ABB's Mike Quay on the current state of the Data Center Industry



The future of data centers is more dynamic than ever, and innovation will be the key to meeting rising demands. As AI, cloud computing and edge technologies continue to evolve, I think we'll see major advancements in how data centers are designed—especially in systems that prioritize uptime, energy efficiency and scalable growth.

These improvements could help make data center infrastructure more resilient, sustainable and ready for whatever comes next.

1. Mike, data centers are clearly more vital than ever. What trends are driving the demand, and how are you helping clients navigate them?

We're in the midst of a massive data boom, fueled heavily by artificial intelligence. In fact, AI startups alone are now seeking power requirements of 5 to 25 megawatts. Combine that with a projected \$301.8 billion* market value by 2023 and a 10.5%* CAGR through 2030, and it's clear: data centers must scale fast—and smart. At ABB, we support that growth with system solutions that are efficient, sustainable and ready for the future.

2. Downtime in a data center can be catastrophic. How are you helping your customers avoid costly outages?

The stakes are high—two-thirds of outages now cost \$100,000** or more, and many go much higher. That's why we engineer with uptime in mind. Solutions like Ty-Grip™ hook-and-loop cable ties and Ty-Duct® wire ducts eliminate messy cable nests that cause accidental disconnections. Clean installs and organized cabling not only help prevent issues—they make expansion and service faster and safer.

3. With every data center having unique requirements, how do you design infrastructure that's both flexible and future-ready?

Scalability is everything. Whether you're building new or upgrading on the fly, we help customers stay nimble. Our Kindorf® modular metal framing and Superstrut® systems are design-agnostic, reducing install time enabling rapid day-two expansion without re-engineering. The faster a facility scales, the sooner it contributes to profitability.

4. Safety and sustainability are becoming critical KPIs. How is ABB innovating in those areas?

Traditional grounding methods like exothermic welding come with safety risks, labor intensity, and material waste. Our Blackburn® EZGround™ compression connectors are a safer, cleaner alternative. They install in any weather, meet all major regulatory standards and reduce the number of required components. It's a smart way to protect both your people and your budget.

5. How do ABB solutions help contractors and engineers execute projects faster and more cost-effectively?

Contractors and specifying engineers are under immense pressure to deliver on tight timelines. ABB helps streamline. Our Color-Keyed® compression system reduces guesswork with color-coded dies, while our modular cable management tools and liquidtight conduit systems offer plug-and-play reliability. Speed matters—and the faster an expansion is complete, the faster it begins generating value.

6. Looking ahead, how is ABB preparing for the evolving needs of data centers in the AI era and beyond?

We see AI, edge computing and sustainable design converging—and we're ready. Our full suite of solutions—from Blackburn® EZGround™ ground system to Ocal® corrosion-resistant conduits—is built for performance and adaptability. We're not just supplying components; we're enabling a shift toward smarter, safer and more scalable infrastructure. That's what the next generation of data centers demands—and it's what we deliver.

7. With sustainability becoming a core requirement, how is ABB helping data centers meet ESG goals without compromising performance?

Sustainability isn't optional anymore—it's a business imperative. We've made that a design priority across our solutions. For example, our Blackburn® EZGround™ grounding system connectors reduce waste by using fewer components and avoiding hazardous materials like black powder. Our heat shrink tubing and PVC-coated Ocal® systems offer long-term corrosion protection, reducing maintenance needs and environmental impact. Sustainability and system reliability should never be trade-offs—and with ABB, they're not.

8. What role does standardization play in reducing complexity and risk for operators and contractors alike?

The impact is significant. The more standardized your electrical system is, the more predictable your installation and maintenance become. That's why products like our Color-Keyed® compression lugs and Ty-Rap® cable ties are engineered for consistency—same performance, every time. We also build tools and components to work seamlessly together, reducing training time, errors and troubleshooting in the field. Standardization isn't just about compliance—it's about confidence.

* Data Center Market Report, P&S Intelligence. ** 2023 Outage Analysis, Uptime Institute
