

Norway to House "World's Largest" Datacentre

Written by Marco Attard
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The small Norwegian town of Ballangen, located in the Arctic Circle, is set to house what is claimed to be the "world's largest" datacentre-- a massive facility covering 600000 square metres.



The area makes it bigger than the current leader in datacentre size, a facility in Langfang, China. However the record might soon be beaten by a still-in-development centre in Nevada, the US.

The facility will be built by Kolos, an US-Norwegian company with offices in Norway, the US and Europe. It says the datacentre will initially draw in 70MW of power, a total to grow by 1000MW once the facility is fully built. The power will come from renewable sources, namely hydropower stations and wind farms, and the facility will operate at 60% reduction in energy to make what Kolos claims is "the most competitive datacentre in the world."

"It's quite literally the lowest power cost in Europe-- and 100% of the power is renewable on one of the most stable grids in the world," the company tells the BBC. "It's in a region of the planet that is naturally cool and has ideal humidity, so we can keep servers cool without having to artificially chill them."

The site also adds physical security to what is described as a "fortress for data," since it is surrounded by water and hills.

Kolos adds it already managed to raise "several million dollars" for the project from Norwegian investment, even as it is currently looking to US investment banks for the remaining necessary

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funds.

The datacentre promises to employ at least "some" of the technology students attending the nearby university. However, the area has the reputation of suffering the highest rate of sick leave in Norway, something possibly related to its history as a mining community. Kolos says the datacentre will still benefit the local economy, and in any case it already has the support of 5 local mayors.

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