

CASE STUDY: PROACTIVE PROCUREMENT OF BREAKERS AND SEL RELAYS REDUCES SWITCHBOARD LEAD-TIME RISK



THE CUSTOMER

Large mission-critical data center customer utilizing Access Electric Supply as the standard low-voltage switchboard supplier across multiple projects.

THE CHALLENGE

During 2026, lead times for breakers above 1,200A expanded from approximately 8–10 weeks to more than 20 weeks, while SEL protection relays extended to roughly 30 weeks. The risk shifted from manufacturing capacity to component availability. As a result, switchboard lead times became increasingly dependent on the availability of individual components, making early identification and procurement critical to maintaining project schedules. A delay in a single component could ultimately delay completion of the entire switchboard.

AES APPROACH

AES analyzed historical usage and identified standardized breaker and relay configurations. Working with customers and manufacturing partners, AES placed advance orders for critical components and established vendor-managed inventory strategies.

ACTIONS TAKEN

- Forecasted future demand
- Standardized commonly used part numbers
- Pre-purchased long-lead breakers and SEL relays
- Monitored component-level constraints
- Communicated risks before they impacted project schedules

RESULTS

Production schedules were maintained despite market shortages. Equipment manufacturers gained access to critical components when needed, customers reduced schedule risk, and project teams avoided costly delays associated with component shortages.

WHY IT MATTERS: Supply-chain constraints are increasingly occurring below the equipment level. Organizations that proactively manage critical components can create a meaningful competitive advantage in project execution.

425-988-6206
20905 66th Avenue South
Kent, WA 98032
www.AccessElectricSupply.com

