

Cybercom

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenge

Enhance and expand client service offerings for collaboration, connectivity, and mobility with a reliable, robust Ethernet fabric

Solution

- Brocade VDX 6720 Switches
- Brocade VDX 6710 Switches
- Brocade VCS Fabric technology

Results

- Improved flexibility and simplified switch management with a single fabric architecture
- Enabled seamless shifting of links from one switch to another
- Reduced time requirements for software and hardware upgrades
- Supported an expanding VMware environment in the data center

Cybercom Builds Client Connections with a Brocade Ethernet Fabric

Cybercom knows that skills and expertise in the latest technology help it to build a strong business case for customers. With 1400 employees in seven countries, the IT consulting company helps private and public companies improve their communications services and connectivity.

Cybercom provides the entire production chain for its customers, including turnkey solutions that cover everything from planning to maintenance. Large organizations from a range of fields—including telecom, media, manufacturing, banking and finance, automotive, and the public sector—rely on Cybercom for its collaboration, mobility, and connectivity expertise.

Communicating the Needs of the Network

In Finland, Cybercom's aging infrastructure was nearing the end of its life. "It was time to get rid of the old switches and replace them with new ones," says Rolf Koski, IT Infrastructure Manager at Cybercom. The company needed better performance and more bandwidth, and it wanted to move to a more simplified, flexible network architecture.

A Brocade® Ethernet fabric promised the performance and bandwidth that could support business growth while minimizing management requirements.

The biggest driving factor for Cybercom was the need for speed. Koski says his organization was looking for 10 Gigabit Ethernet (GbE) speeds in the core of its data centers. In addition, the company

wanted to unify the network fabric. "At the time, we had a separate Storage Area Network [SAN]," he says. "We decided that when we moved to 10 GbE and an Ethernet fabric infrastructure, we would essentially merge the two environments to radically simplify overall management. For us, this was a key driver for the upgrade."

A converged data and storage network simplifies data center cabling configurations without disrupting existing Fibre Channel installations. Plus, Cybercom would gain management efficiencies and performance improvements for both its data and storage requirements.

Koski contacted a short list of providers with high-performance data center switches. "I sent our requirements list

out to the vendors, and they came back with their models that fulfilled our specs," explains Koski. He put all the information he gathered into a spreadsheet and took into consideration factors such as price per port.

"Brocade provided additional features that the others did not," Koski says. "The deciding factor was that Brocade data center switches can form a single fabric whereby you can add more switches and ports, and still have everything act like a single switch."

Koski selected two types of Brocade Ethernet switches for its main data center in the city of Tampere: four Brocade VDX® 6720-24 Switches with 24 10 GbE LAN ports and four Brocade VDX 6720-60 Switches with 60 10 GbE LAN ports. In addition, he chose six Brocade VDX 6710 Switches, which operate at 1 GbE and help bridge the new and old infrastructure.

Koski also rolled out additional 24-port Brocade VDX 6720 Switches for Cybercom's data center in Helsinki and added NetApp network storage to the network. All the switches are running Brocade VCS® Fabric technology, which helps simplify and automate networks built on Ethernet fabrics. VCS Fabric technology allows organizations to

flatten network designs, provide Virtual Machine (VM) mobility without network reconfiguration, and manage the entire fabric more efficiently. The Brocade VDX switches also help protect existing IT investments and support cloud-based networking.

In With the New, Working Alongside the Old

Initially, Cybercom deployed the new Brocade equipment alongside the existing network infrastructure. "We ran it for some time to make sure it was keeping up and had no major problems," Koski says. "During our next quarterly maintenance session, we moved key components over to the new fabric and connected the old and the new with 10 GbE links from core switch to core switch."

The entire deployment was a fairly quick process. The Brocade solutions arrived in early April, and most of the blade chassis were transferred to the Ethernet fabric in May.

"The new Brocade architecture has enabled us to do things at higher speeds—for example, updating firmware in the switch fabric or supporting failovers with NetApp. Our VMware environment has had no problems when we've upgraded switch software or the NetApp software," says Koski. Moving links from one switch to another also works seamlessly.

WHY BROCADE

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—Rolf Koski, IT Infrastructure Manager
at Cybercom

Ethernet Fabric On the Roadmap

Koski is committed to a roadmap based on the Ethernet protocol, and he has discussed with Brocade the switch and software features that he would like to see in the future. "We've had a good dialogue with the Brocade team in Finland; they have given us sound advice and support," he says.

Brocade has proven to be a strong partner for Cybercom. "Everything went according to plan," says Koski. "They took our concerns seriously, and they helped us with any issues along the way."

Koski is pleased that his firm chose Brocade for the network overhaul. "After doing a comparison, the features and price point matched up for us," he says. "We wanted to have the best networking solutions at a reasonable price, and Brocade met those demands."

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