

# Oncore IT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Challenge

Guarantee high performance and service availability while delivering a flexible "pay-per-port" pricing structure

### Solution

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

### Results

- Ensured service guarantees by eliminating packet loss and high latency at peak times
- Increased network performance by 20 percent
- Provided clients with increased scalability and lower capital expenses by creating "pay-per-port" capabilities
- Improved business results by reducing the time required to resolve network issues

## Oncore IT Keeps Network Services and Customer Promises

Making any top 10 list is difficult, but Oncore IT makes it look easy to rank among the elite Tier 1 bandwidth providers. The cloud managed service provider offers hosting, co-location, and cloud-based services to its highly demanding legal, financial, and enterprise customers. The company operates in only Tier 4 data centers, the highest-standard environments, and provides exceptional customer service. Oncore IT supports its Service Level Agreements (SLAs) 365/24/7 with technical experts and dedicated account managers, and all services are guaranteed. Clients expect unparalleled connectivity, extraordinary system performance, unmatched reliability, and total security—and they get it: Oncore IT's client retention rate is 95 percent.

"The cloud has really become the new Gold Rush as far as IT service delivery is concerned," says Paul Cook, Head of Sales and Marketing at Oncore IT. "Users have an awful lot of uncertainty and doubt surrounding the cloud. So service providers must take total responsibility for their cloud solutions. Our data center networking infrastructure is key to achieving this."

### Growing Pains

As Oncore IT moved more customers to the cloud, the company faced the challenges of data growth on its network and needed more shared storage for its virtualized and hosted solutions. In addition, 90 percent of its clients used a virtualized server farm for online backup and disaster recovery solutions.

"We were experiencing performance issues with the network," says Mick Caney, Oncore IT's Technical Lead. "At peak times we were seeing congestion and packet loss. The issue was most pronounced when servers were accessing our HDS BlueArc [NAS/iSCSI] storage platform over the network. Latency was too high, and throughput wasn't truly wire-speed."

### Ethernet Fabric is the Answer

The company wanted to use proven, best-of-breed networking equipment to deliver a truly exceptional cloud experience to its customers. Following a review of competitive products, Oncore IT selected a high-performance solution based on Brocade® data center switches

and Brocade VCS® Fabric technology. Brocade Ethernet fabrics are designed to improve network use, maximize application availability, increase scalability, and simplify network architectures in virtualized data centers.

Oncore IT created two 10 Gigabit Ethernet (GbE) fabrics using eight Brocade VDX® 6710 Switches and two Brocade VDX 6720 Switches. One fabric is located in London, at the corporate headquarters, and the other is at Oncore IT's replicated data center in Amsterdam. Brocade Partner NetSumo supplied the equipment.

### Greater Scalability, Flexibility Provide a Win-Win

Upgrading to the Brocade VDX-based Ethernet fabric solved the company's performance issues and improved overall network performance by 20 percent. However, "our investment in Brocade was not purely to give us some very necessary service improvement," Cook says. "Our partnership with Brocade took us one step further in guaranteeing our services to clients."

"Aside from solving the performance issues, one of the key benefits of Brocade switches is that they support virtual chassis," says Caney. This functionality gives administrators more flexibility in equipment management at data center sites where suites of switches are located on multiple floors.

In addition, Brocade equipment has simplified network management. "Brocade Ethernet fabric technology allows us to begin the move away from Spanning Tree Protocol [STP], which can become difficult to manage as networks grow," Caney says. "Now we have a scalable network, which is ideal for future growth."

While the primary goal of the project was to enhance performance, the upgrade also offers commercial advantages. "Most of our clients need only two or three ports for connectivity," Cook says. "Now they can take switch ports from us—and pay per port—with their servers linked to our Ethernet fabric. Having Brocade is a win-win for everyone. We benefit because our infrastructure is easier to manage and network performance is guaranteed. And our clients save money by using our switch environment rather than buying their own. It's a great deal for Oncore, and it's a great deal for our clients."

### Down the Road

Brocade Ethernet switches and Brocade VCS Fabric technology provide the service levels that Oncore IT needs now while helping the service provider prepare for the future. "We can start leveraging emerging technologies such as converged enhanced Ethernet and Data Center Bridging [DCB]," Caney says.

### WHY BROCADE

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—Paul Cook, Head of Sales and Marketing at Oncore IT

Perhaps the greatest future reward lies in what Oncore IT does not have to do—spend time keeping the network up and running.

"The biggest benefit that we've seen since deploying Brocade switches is that the network pretty much takes care of itself," Caney says. "We don't need to spend so much time tending to issues, and that's good for business."

For more information, visit [www.brocade.com](http://www.brocade.com).

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