

RackCorp

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenge

Enable rapid scalability for low-latency, high-volume services while supporting an ongoing automation strategy.

Solution

- Brocade VDX 6740 Switches for network core.

Results

- Scaled network with high performance to support 100-fold increase in traffic.
- Leveraged Brocade SDN features to integrate with existing automation platform.
- Simplified management and configuration greatly through Brocade VCS Fabric technology.
- Achieved rapid return on investment while supporting new growth.

Speed and Automation Jet-Propel Service Success

RackCorp is a well-known Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) provider with secure, high-performance, and reliable cloud solutions. The company continuously innovates to create and deliver competitive new services. A successful example of this is CacheCentric, its Content Delivery Network (CDN).

CacheCentric is popular with many of the Internet's top websites for powering image and video delivery. Fueled by growing customer demand, RackCorp's traffic increased by 100-fold over a 12-month period. In addition, RackCorp's partner program has grown by 60 percent, customer demand for server backup and data center services is increasing rapidly, and the company plans to go live with its fifth Australian Point of Presence (PoP). Although RackCorp had planned to upgrade its network, rapid growth highlighted the need for greater scalability and accelerated the upgrade timetable.

To 10 Gigabits and Beyond

RackCorp maintains a presence in 10 countries and 22 data center POPs, each with diverse capabilities for delivering network, dedicated server, virtual server,

and cloud services. The company also customizes services for its customers, which results in having one of the most diverse networks that can be found in a hosted services environment.

"We've had continued significant growth in key sectors where our CDN and Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) protection services are essential," said David Coote, Director of Sales and Marketing at RackCorp. "As a result, an ever-increasing volume of data is moving between our data centers in Australia. We needed to quickly move from 1 Gbps interfaces to 10 Gbps interfaces to keep pace."

RackCorp's incumbent switching vendor had not delivered sufficient 10 Gbps innovation to meet the company's dynamic needs, and so it began looking for a new solution.

WHY BROCADE

“We chose Brocade because of its innovation in the next-generation networking space, and word-of-mouth feedback was also positive from our industry peers. The Brocade approach to programmatic control over tasks also fits in well with our automation strategies.”

— Stephen Dendtler, Network Operations Manager at RackCorp

High Speed with High Value

As RackCorp evaluated its options, it considered Brocade® solutions. The more the team learned about Brocade capabilities, the more they liked them. Speed was essential, because CacheCentric is Australia’s independently verified fastest CDN. Stephen Dendtler, Network Operations Manager of RackCorp, says that one of the most impressive features of the Brocade switches is their low latency.

“Latency is critical for us in delivering the performance that customers expect, and the speed of Brocade switches is fast for the price point,” he said. “The Brocade solution also provides a greater incentive to grow our content delivery network and high-volume network services.”

RackCorp chose Brocade VDX® 6740 Switches with Brocade VCS® Fabric technology as its core network solution because they provided the highest performance at the best value, which allows the company to keep service prices highly competitive. Brocade VDX 6740 Switches are top-of-rack switches that support 1/10/40 GbE and

provide the efficiency and flexibility needed to deliver low-latency, high-volume services. Brocade VCS Fabric technology enables a zero-touch ability to scale the infrastructure as needed. Having a fabric approach in the data centers also enables RackCorp to combine its Brocade devices into an automated, efficient, highly available, and virtual machine-aware network fabric.

SDN Features Complement Existing Automation

“We also chose Brocade VDX Switches for their SDN features,” said Dendtler. “We operate our own SDN system to automate network operations in Australia. The Brocade VDX Switches fit in seamlessly to support our automation strategies.”

A Good Fit

Brocade planned the network architecture, enabling RackCorp to deploy Brocade fabrics at data centers in Sydney, Melbourne, and Perth, as well as in Hong Kong. The new fabric is the right fit for supporting dedicated server, virtual server, and cloud computing services. In addition,

RackCorp can easily add switches to the fabric to support network growth without interruption. By connecting the switch to power and the network, it is added to the fabric. RackCorp plans to continue its Brocade VDX Switch deployment throughout its global data center network.

Accelerating Configuration

Since the new Brocade switches were deployed, configuration changes are much faster and easier. Dendtler says that the time to propagate changes has fallen from seconds to milliseconds—saving time for RackCorp staff and enabling agility to respond even more quickly to customer needs.

Extending to Cloud and Beyond

The new Brocade switches have provided a backbone for the company's growth. The network's speed, reliability, and high performance have attracted new clients to RackCorp's low-latency, high-bandwidth environment.

RackCorp is looking forward to taking a closer look at other features of the Brocade VDX Switches and applying them to its cloud environment.

Removing legacy protocols and simplifying management through the fabric is expected to pay dividends in its cloud service and across more data center locations.

"The Brocade switches have enabled our CDN and IP connectivity services to achieve new levels of performance," says Dendtler, "and at the same time, the change has opened up new market channels."

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