GlobalConnect

SERVICE PROVIDER

Brocade Sets the Standard for Exceptional Performance for GlobalConnect

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenge

Deliver superior network service with low latency and high reliability to a fast-growing customer base

Solution

- Brocade MLX Series routers
- Brocade FastIron Edge X Series switches
- Brocade FastIron WS Series switches
- Brocade NetIron XMR Series routers

Results

- Increased network scalability and performance to support exponential growth
- Gained the ability to deliver "five nines" uptime and full redundancy to customers
- Created a low-latency network to ensure optimal application performance

For businesses in Denmark, northern Germany, and Sweden, GlobalConnect is a popular carrier of choice. As Denmark's leading alternative provider of network and hosting solutions, GlobalConnect manages a Carrier Ethernet network that spans its home country and parts of Germany and Sweden. Since launching its business in 1998, GlobalConnect has experienced extraordinary growth.

With €300 million (approximately U.S. $411 million) invested in 12,000 km of optical fiber—and more than 1000 km being added annually—GlobalConnect is able to provide customers with very high speeds and supply extensive transmission networks to service providers and mobile operators using Carrier Ethernet, DWDM, and WDM technologies. GlobalConnect has more than 200 carrier customers and 700 enterprise customers, and has doubled customer connections year over year. This fast-paced growth was starting to impact network performance, prompting GlobalConnect to expand its network to accommodate the increasing subscriber base.

BUILDING A SOLID OPTICAL FIBER NETWORK

Customers, including major banks, rely on GlobalConnect to deliver scalability, reliability, and security. GlobalConnect needed a networking infrastructure solution that could meet the growing requirements of its customer base and provide exceptional performance—at the best possible price.

GlobalConnect made a significant investment in its network in 2004, and selected Brocade® products for the majority of its infrastructure needs. Over the years, GlobalConnect has deployed more than 2500 Brocade network switches, with up to 250 purchased at a time. "This is an accomplishment in itself and says a lot about the product quality," says Peter Olsen, Chief Technology Officer of GlobalConnect. "The switches are scattered throughout Denmark; we've deployed Carrier Ethernet throughout the country."

Olsen's staff is currently deploying about 30 new switches per month, with the majority used as Customer Premises Equipment (CPE)

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devices to connect enterprises to GlobalConnect's optical fiber network. These switches include the Brocade FastIron® Edge X Series and FastIron WS Series. In addition, GlobalConnect has deployed Brocade NetIron® XMR Series and Brocade MLX® Series routers.

According to Olsen, GlobalConnect initially selected Brocade because its products delivered from day one the ideal mix of industry-leading price, performance, and features. GlobalConnect has since standardized on Brocade products because it needed a packet-switching platform that could offer transport at a lower cost than its SONET/SDH-based network. "Carrier Ethernet is one-tenth the price per bit transported compared to SONET/SDH," explains Olsen.

RIDING THE LIGHT

GlobalConnect's fiber-based Carrier Ethernet network, based on Brocade equipment, has allowed the company to build out its network essentially to customer order. By using a ring architecture rather than a star-based topology, GlobalConnect ensures "five nines" uptime and provides critical redundancy to its customers.

Through its extensive infrastructure, GlobalConnect is connected to the Internet via D-IX, AMS-IX, and five Tier 1 bandwidth providers. In addition, GlobalConnect was instrumental in bringing connectivity to two ocean bridges—connecting the Danish island of Sjælland with Denmark to the west, and Sweden to the east. "Without our infrastructure, access for motorists would stop because the toll booths, gates, and signage wouldn't work," Olsen says.

GlobalConnect offers significantly low latency for enterprise customers, including those hundreds of miles apart. "Applications can run badly over slow connections, which affects performance and ultimately staff productivity," explains Olsen. Low latency ensures optimal application performance, which is especially critical to financial institutions and other markets that cannot afford delays.

NO END IN SIGHT FOR NETWORK GROWTH

Olsen says GlobalConnect has invested millions of dollars in Brocade equipment, and he expects to continue purchasing solutions from Brocade. "If someone had told me that we'd have 2500 Brocade switches installed within seven years, I'd have thought they were crazy," he says. "But I am very proud of the size and performance of the network we rolled out in that timeframe."

Olsen adds that from 2008 to 2011, GlobalConnect experienced 100 percent customer growth, a trend that he expects will continue. Brocade networking solutions

WHY BROCADE

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— Peter Olsen, Chief Technology Officer at GlobalConnect

have the built-in scalability to support such growth well into the future. Olsen also welcomes the direct relationship with Brocade and the world-class technical support his company has received.

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