

SAN DIEGO COUNTY CREDIT UNION



SERVICE PROVIDER

Credit Union Yields ROI with Brocade Investment

Objective

- Upgrade the credit union's aging network infrastructure with Brocade switches and routers to improve performance and eliminate bottlenecks and downtime
- Maintain secure, reliable business services for customers

Solution

- The Brocade BigIron RX-8 Series switches deliver 20 Gigabit Ethernet in the network core and FastIron SuperX switches support Gigabit Ethernet at the network edge; FastIron Edge Switches 9604 connect the 24 branch offices to the WAN
- ServerIron application management switches direct traffic
- Brocade IronView Network Manager helps the IT team monitor the network

Results

- Brocade infrastructure solved the network connectivity issues in a single day
- Brocade FastIron SuperX with PoE easily supports the Avaya VoIP system
- Brocade equipment lowers total cost of ownership

As a respected financial leader in southern California, the San Diego County Credit Union (SDCCU) must maintain secure, reliable customer services for its more than 170,000 members. The credit union's network performance, especially the core switch, was threatening vital business services. As the hub-and-spoke network become more complex, the aging infrastructure experienced connectivity issues and would go offline.

Frustrated with the poorly functioning network, Sean Azhadi, Senior Vice President of Systems and Technology at San Diego County Credit Union, was open to alternatives. He told Brocade® representatives during a business meeting that if they could bring the BigIron® RX into production, SDCCU would be a Brocade customer.

Brocade quickly had the BigIron up and running. "Brocade proved to me that their products work," says Azhadi. "Now our infrastructure is Brocade equipment."

OBJECTIVE

After Brocade proved its mettle, Azhadi began designing plans to migrate the credit union to a mesh network that would support Voice over IP (VoIP) and Layer 3 technologies. SDCCU wanted a reliable, high-performance network that protected financial information while giving customers constant access to their accounts.

"A financial institution cannot have its servers go offline," says Azhadi. "We needed a solution that would support our business services so customers could get to their accounts and access their financial records when they needed them."

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SOLUTION

Azhadi and his team took advantage of the many features in Brocade equipment to create a converged data and voice network that supports a host of business-critical applications. The network supports approximately 650 users, 900 clients, and 150 servers. Traffic consists of VoIP, commerce, TCP/IP, print/file services, email, and other business applications.

This traffic travels over BigIron RX-8 switches through the 20 Gigabit Ethernet network core. FastIron® SuperX switches manage traffic at the network edge, and ServerIron application management switches direct traffic across the commerce, home banking, and public web site servers. The 24 branch offices are connected to the wide area network by FastIron Edge 9604 switches, and IronView® Network Manager (INM) gives SDCCU a single point for network management.

RESULTS

Since upgrading the network with Brocade equipment, SDCCU has eliminated its connectivity and performance issues. Azhadi and his team made detailed plans for upgrading the network, and they were able to complete the final migration in a single day.

“Our problems went away overnight,” says Azhadi. “One night we were pulling out our hair trying to make the servers work and the next day we didn’t have a single complaint.”

The IT team relied on INM to push configurations to all the network devices. SDCCU keeps thorough inventory records by labeling all switches and ports. This documentation helps the team maintain VPN devices and standardize configurations across switches. When a switch is configured incorrectly, the IT team can discover the error quickly and make adjustments easily.

The Brocade equipment supported the Avaya IP telephony system without difficulty, even introducing more flexible routing options and the convenience of Power over Ethernet (PoE). The previous switch could not support PoE. Because the FastIron SuperX supports PoE, SDCCU did not have to invest in additional power supplies or power injection devices.

“VoIP has become a critical application for us because our members must be able to reach us,” says Azhadi. “Brocade gave us the flexibility to move and split the data center so that we can quickly add more people remotely when the call volume increases. It has been great for us.”

SDCCU relies on INM to monitor the complex network. Azhadi can monitor and understand traffic activity through the graphical user interface. “The green, yellow, and red controls help me view network activity at a glance. It’s a life saver for us.”

As Azhadi looks toward the future, he sees SDCCU poised for growth. The credit union’s

network can easily adapt to an increase in members, new branch offices, or additional network applications.

“With Brocade solutions, we can easily expand our network speed and ports. We expect this network will last us for the next five to seven years, a considerably longer lifespan than most networks, which usually scale for three to four years,” he says.

“This network will support our next level of business expansion without any issues.”

Investing in Brocade equipment has yielded the credit union a high return on investment.

“The Brocade switches have been fantastic in terms of scalability, time saved, reliability, and uptime, and they were overall less expensive than other vendors’ devices,” says Azhadi. “We factor all of that in ROI.”

Azhadi says another factor that increases ROI is customer support. For SDCCU, Brocade’s ongoing support and technical assistance have exceeded the credit union’s expectations. “Local support and performance were key reasons why we chose Brocade, and we haven’t been disappointed. Brocade has proven again and again that they can deliver results when we need them.”

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