

VIEJAS ENTERPRISES

IP NETWORKS

Casino Bets on Brocade—and Wins

Objective

- Relieve traffic strain on outdated network
- Ensure five nine's uptime and availability
- Implement centralized management and increase security to prevent unauthorized access or rogue devices on the network

Solution

- Brocade BigIron 8000 and 15000 Layer 2/ Layer 3 switches boost performance both to the desktop and the backbone
- Brocade FastIron 15000 systems ensure fulfillment of strict service level agreements
- Brocade IronView software provides a single point of management

Results

- Network uptime that meets the needs of a 24/7 business
- Backbone performance improved 10 to 20 times
- Performance to the desktop improved as much as 100 times
- Improved performance reduced service request calls to IT

Viejas Enterprises is owned and operated by the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians; it includes the 280,000-square-foot Viejas Casino, with five restaurants, and the Viejas Outlet Center, a shopping mall with 57 retail stores plus food outlets. The group also includes banking and real estate projects.

SUMMARY

Viejas Enterprises is building the casino of the future near San Diego, California. High-performance networking technology is helping this casino introduce innovative casino enhancements that appeal to the crowds visiting its gaming attractions.

The casino offers players 2,250 slot machines; more than 80 tables for Blackjack, Pai Gow, Caribbean Stud, Let-It-Ride, and Poker; a 150-seat off-track betting facility; and a 1,500-seat bingo showroom. The newest 48,000-square-foot addition at Viejas Casino features a high-end bar and lounge area, a VIP lounge, and additional slot and table games. This new space will be unlike anything in any other San Diego casino.

OBJECTIVE

At Viejas Casino, network uptime is never left to a roll of the dice because system uptime and application availability are much too critical for this popular casino's success.

"Our goal is to have five-nines uptime. Our systems must be available 24 hours a day, every day of the year," says Moti Vyas, CIO of Viejas Enterprises.

Within a few years of opening its doors, the casino's six-person network engineers team noticed a considerable strain on the network. Casino operations and a multitude of applications were draining the network's performance. With a 100Mb backbone and 10Mb to the desktop, the network was about to fold.

In addition to needing 365/24/7 availability, the casino has strict service level agreements with its internal business units. And because the casino is owned and managed by the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, it has regulatory responsibilities to the tribal government as well as to the tribal gaming commission.

BROCADE

"We have strict requirements to share our business information with our internal business users, tribal government and the gaming commission. It puts an intensive demand on our bandwidth," says Vyas. "Because of the 7x24 casino environment, most of our systems are mission critical. Even HR systems which are not mission critical in many organizations become mission critical here."

SOLUTION

In the summer of 2004, Viejas Casino replaced its assortment of Cisco, HP, Netgear, and Nortel equipment with BigIron® and FastIron® switches from Brocade®. The new Brocade-based network has a star topology with a redundant core and dedicated WAN connections to satellite offices.

The network supports approximately 2,200 users, 800 clients, and 120 servers. A variety of applications, including enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer relationship management (CRM), and SQL, as well as all casino-floor systems, run across the network. These applications keep the casino in business."

RESULTS

Since upgrading the network with Brocade equipment, Viejas Casino's network performance has improved significantly. Performance is as much as 100 times better to the desktop and 10 to 20 times better to the backbone.

The IT team now spends less time managing, configuring, and administering the network. The Brocade IronView® centralized management gives administrators a single point from which to manage the entire set of switches. Network reports allow the team to have a better view of overall network performance.

"Before we added Brocade, we had no true statistical information. With IronView we get detailed views of the health of the network," explains Vyas.

In addition, the IT department receives fewer service calls related to poor network performance.

Vyas stresses that Brocade has been integral to the casino's growth plans since it was first deployed in 2004.

"Our recent expansion confirms our initial vision of the network," he says. "The network has been able to easily scale to accommodate our newly added, \$20 million expansion project."

Brocade equipment and the Brocade support team will continue to be integral to the network's successful growth.

"We have received excellent technical support during design, implementation, and maintenance," says Vyas. "Parts arrive the day after our request is made, and the engineers are extremely knowledgeable."

Vyas was particularly impressed when the Brocade engineers were willing to come on-site at 2 a.m. "We had to have them on-site in the middle of the night for many days due to our business constraints. They were there working with us every day with no complaints."

Ram Patrachari, Director of Network/ Telecommunications, added, "We have VoIP, Streaming Audio, and Streaming Video pilots designed to increase our guests' satisfaction with the casino. Brocade has been willing to partner with us to try out these technologies."

This type of can-do attitude has helped Brocade cement a strong relationship with Viejas Casino.

"We can buy gear and get decent prices from a lot of hardware companies, but what's important to us is our vendor relationship," says Vyas. "Brocade has met all our expectations."

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