Networking & security

NEW NETWORK PERFECT REMEDY FOR GROWING PAINS

80gbps	POE Network	HPE
Backbone bandwidth upgrade	Ready for unified communications	Network solution

The Challenge

Having experienced chronic issues concerning the performance of their network, the UK arm of Evotec engaged long-standing IT partner Softcat to identify the root of the problems and make recommendations for an immediate solution. The network was struggling under the demands of the business' growth, both in terms of application use and the amount of data now traversing the infrastructure.

To this end, Softcat's engineers suggested a network audit occur to complete a full health check of the network architecture. This revealed that a significant amount of the switch estate would soon be end of life and end of support, and more importantly they had not separated switching for server and storage traffic. Together, the age and configuration issues discovered were the primary reason for the performance challenges experienced.

With so much legacy technology, Softcat believed it would be prudent to overhaul the entire network, creating a modern architecture capable of meeting the performance demands of the business today, whilst providing room for growth in the future. This would mean replacing significant elements of both edge and core networks, and with that in mind Softcat began to formulate a plan for Evotec's future network.

The Solution

To ensure that what was finally implemented would be able to cope with the large data growth demands of the network and desire for new collaboration technologies like voice and video, Softcat suggested a number of candidate technologies and helped Evotec explore them. An existing HP network user, this was one of the vendors for review. Evotec's existing knowledge, combined with the capability of the technology, ultimately made the decision that HP was still the best option for them. Softcat therefore architected the new solution on this technology accordingly.

The new network infrastructure would help Evotec make some big strides forward, dramatically increasing desktop network bandwidth from 100mbps to 1gbps and backbone bandwidth from 2gbps to as high as 80gbps, providing lots of room for growth. Softcat also proposed the infrastructure be accompanied by HP's latest network management tools, which would give Evotec's IT team insight into their network to better manage it and remediate issues. With plans to refresh their Unified Communications (UC) in the near future, Softcat also proposed a Power over Ethernet (PoE) network which would make this upgrade significantly easier.

With a plan in place, and valuable knowledge of the existing infrastructure make-up, Softcat was instructed to deliver the refresh on behalf of Evotec. Engineering resource was drafted in and the network switch took place over several weeks, Softcat carefully planning the introduction of the new network and working around when planned downtime would be least intrusive. Evotec now enjoys a powerful platform that will enable them to deliver better service to their end users and is ready to meet their aspirations for the future.

The Benefits

Overhauling Evotec's network has given them a network the business can now depend on, capable of handling the applications and data the business expects to escalate. Likewise, armed with the right tools, the visibility Evotec is now afforded means greater resiliency as network troubleshooting is made considerably easier. The performance improvements have been welcomed, user complaints are almost non-existent and tasks that were previously constrained by the network, like working with VMware have disappeared.

"This was a significant project and needed careful orchestration. We've turned to Softcat many times to help us with projects of importance and this was no different. As ever, the combination of their expertise and resources provided us with an excellent solution. This project further proves the trust we have in their work and has strengthened our professional relationship with them tenfold."

Jon Reason, Senior Systems Engineer - Evotec