

Telecom Gains Visibility into Network Events and Systems

Smart Net Total Care gives Alestra more time to focus on business.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
ALESTRA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry: Telecommunications Location: Mexico City, Mexico Number of Employees: 2000 	
CHALLENGE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining current network device inventory was time-consuming Lack of visibility into device patch and support status increased operational risk Difficulty in tracking all system (IOS) versions increased risk of downtime due to incompatibilities 	
SOLUTION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cisco Smart Net Total Care 	
RESULTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saved three to five hours per week in installed base management Gained instant visibility into accurate inventory reports Simplified software patch updates, planning, and budgeting with access to detailed device information 	

Challenge

Alestra's focus on innovation has made it one of Mexico's leaders in providing information and communication technology (ICT) solutions. The company's technologically advanced infrastructure is optimized to deliver the highest possible level of performance and a superior customer experience. Alestra recently launched cloud-based services to the health, education, and government markets. Its branded offerings include some of the country's first Smart Content, Contact Smart, Smart Campus, Video Bridge, and Medical Record services in addition to cloud-powered business solutions for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), remote Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), and mobility.

Alestra's service delivery infrastructure is made up of two networks and more than 3600 devices. The networks are based primarily on Cisco equipment, and the network operations department manages its infrastructure using several OSS frameworks. However, with a large number of devices, Alestra did not have the visibility it needed into each device with its associated software version and support coverage information. It was difficult to identify end-of-life devices or

support contract renewal dates. Inventory updates were time-consuming and changes occur frequently in an infrastructure of this size, making it almost impossible to have an accurate view at any given moment. Without a view into all of the device models and software versions of its Cisco network, there was an increased risk of problems due to software version incompatibilities or outdated patches.

"We needed a better way to know when devices require upgrading and to maintain a current inventory," says Sergio Gonzalez, operations manager for Alestra. "Our services depend on having detailed knowledge of each system with its patching and coverage status in order to optimize network availability and performance."

Solution

Alestra recently implemented Cisco Smart Net Total Care to help it address these challenges. Smart Net Total Care includes smart service capabilities that deliver proactive support and actionable intelligence to increase operational efficiency. Smart Net Total Care also integrates extensive inventory management and analysis, customized security alerts, service contract management, and proactive diagnostics.

“Smart Net Total Care is enabling us to become more efficient,” says Gonzalez. “With so much detailed information at our fingertips, we can easily track inventory, support contracts, patching, alerts, and all of the other essential information that we need, while freeing us to deliver more innovative services.”

—Sergio Gonzalez, Operations Manager

With Smart Net Total Care, Alestra is able to bring together its Cisco networking equipment and support contract inventory data in one place. Smart Net Total Care offers a web portal that provides Alestra operations and engineering team members with a secure environment to access, review, modify, and download reports. In-depth reporting enables the Alestra teams to identify devices that need system updates, support contracts coming up for renewal, and level of service coverage for each device.

Smart Net Total Care alerts only apply to specific devices in Alestra’s infrastructure, making it easier for the teams to assess vulnerabilities and take corrective action. And Alestra also has access to the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) around the clock, giving the company access to fast, expert response.

Results

Smart Net Total Care has simplified collaboration between the network maintenance and engineering teams. Through the web portal, team members have access to consistent reports and equal visibility into network systems. As a result, the two teams are able to collaborate more closely and avoid duplicate efforts.

Alestra’s security and patch management programs also benefit. Automatic discovery of machines on the network helps ensure that all devices are accounted for and that no rogue devices find their way onto the network. Being able to monitor patch status helps the teams keep the network level of security high to minimize risk and meet the compliance requirements of healthcare and government customers.

Automatic, targeted alerts also save time. Team members no longer waste time reviewing irrelevant information and can apply specific measures quickly. They also use the web portal frequently to generate quick summary reports and inventory snapshots. The web portal also enables Alestra to gain immediate visibility into the status of service requests and return materials authorizations (RMAs) at the TAC. Gonzalez estimates that Smart Net Total Care saves three to five hours per week in management tasks.

The ability to link support contracts with specific devices helps ensure that each device is covered with an appropriate level of coverage. It also greatly facilitates planning and budgeting for support and upgrades.

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For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Smart Net Total Care visit: www.cisco.com/go/total.

To learn more about Alestra, visit www.alestra.com.mx.

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