Game Developer Ensures 'Over-the-Top' Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wanmei/Perfect World Entertainment
- Over-the-Top Service Provider
- Based in China

Challenge:
- Help network keep pace with rapid business expansion
- Move from "break/fix" to proactive network approach
- Supplement limited IT staff with additional network support expertise

Solution:
- Cisco Smart Net Total Care provides proactive network maintenance
- Automated installed base discovery and analysis frees IT staff for strategic tasks
- Cisco Technical Support Operations Management facilitates problem solving and assists customer with support best practices

Results:
- Achieved two months worth of savings in labor-related costs
- Gained accurate, easy and instant access to state of network installed base
- Positioned company to handle explosive forecasted growth in the future

Perfect World Entertainment uses Cisco Smart Net Total Care to ensure network support matches explosive network growth.

Challenge

Perfect World Entertainment, known as "Wanmei" in Chinese, is a leading online game developer, offering popular, massive multi-player network games, such as *Legend of Martial Arts, Battle of the Immortals,* and *Dragon Excalibur.* The company is one of a fast-emerging group of network-independent, or Over-the-Top (OTT), service providers operating in and outside of China.

Perfect World is typical of many fast-growing OTT providers, expanding much more rapidly than its supporting network infrastructure. In the face of such rapid growth, the company's IT team soon found itself insufficiently staffed to keep up with the rate of network expansion and corresponding network issues. "With our business rapidly growing, ensuring the smooth operation of our network was a challenge," says Perfect World's network operations manager.

To compound the issue, the company's support infrastructure only allowed for problem resolution on a case-by-case "break/fix" basis, which was proving time-consuming and inefficient. Because any downtime in the network could lead to lost customer revenue, Perfect World's IT team knew it had to make network reliability a top priority.

At the time, the company was receiving support from the Cisco Shared Support Program (CSSP) through a third-party partner. Yet even with CSSP, Perfect World found it could not keep pace with the company's growing installed base of Cisco equipment.

Although the technical support and hardware coverage provided by Cisco SMARTnet proved valuable, Perfect World felt it needed to take its support coverage to the next level. So it began looking for a solution that would help it better maintain all of its devices with a proactive, and not break/fix, approach. Seeing Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service as the logical next step, the company jumped on the opportunity to begin deployment.

Solution

To meet Perfect World's network challenges, Cisco recommended using Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service to help the company be more proactive without sacrificing any of its previous service benefits. Cisco also recommended Cisco Technical Support Operations Management (TSOM) to meet the company's personnel shortfall and extend the expertise of its IT staff.

"With our business rapidly growing, ensuring the smooth operation of our network was a challenge. Our prior 'break/fix' approach to network issues was time-consuming and inefficient. Cisco Smart Net Total Care is the proactive solution we needed. It gives us the visibility into our network that was previously missing."

Network Operations Manager
Perfect World

Using the complete and accurate view of its installed base provided by Smart Net Total Care's Inventory, Collection, Reporting, and Analysis (ICRA) function, Perfect World can ensure all devices have up-to-date service coverage, which helps minimize network risk. These benefits also extend to the company's business partners, giving them a comprehensive network view for the very first time. Furthermore, scarce IT resources that were once devoted to manual asset identification are now freed up to focus on strategic network issues, not maintenance tasks.

Perfect World especially appreciates TSOM's ability to quickly expedite equipment shipment, using the Cisco Return Materials Authorization (RMA) process, without keeping its network waiting. "If we do happen to have a problem, we're assured of fast product replacement, thanks to Cisco's Technical Support Operations Manager, who monitors each Perfect World request," says the network operations manager.

Perfect World finds that these two Cisco services complement each other perfectly, with Technical Support Operations Management optimizing its use of Smart Net Total Care by expediting problem resolution through guidance on the proper use of Cisco Services and support best practices. With insight into Perfect World's network, Cisco can also proactively identify future product and service upgrade requirements before they become problematic.

Figure 1. Smart Net Total Care provides secure network device discovery, automated data collection, inventory analysis, and reporting. *Reports can identify gaps in service coverage, equipment approaching end-of-life or end-of-service, security vulnerabilities, and device moves, adds, changes, or deletes. Updates on the current status of the network installed base are easily accessible by the customer using the Smart Net Total Care portal feature.*

| Cisco Devices at Customer | Cisco Collector | | Cisco Data Center | Cisco Smart Net Total Care Portal |
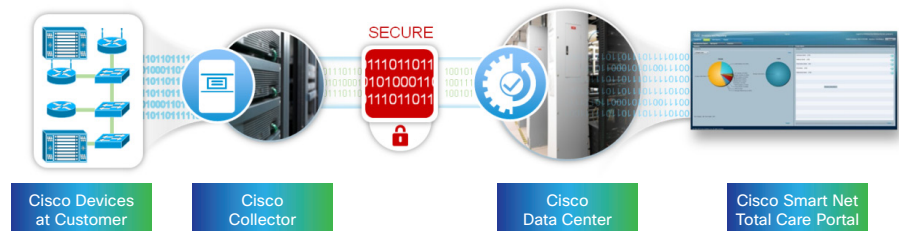
Results

For OTT providers operating with thin margins, cost is always a consideration in network purchasing; however, in Perfect World's case, the overall value received from its network services purchase took greater precedence. Perfect World experienced immediate payoff from Cisco Smart Net Total Care and its Technical Support Operations Management program, with dramatically improved control over its installed base of equipment right from the start. "Cisco Smart Net Total Care is the proactive solution we needed," says the network operations manager. "It gives us the visibility into our network that was previously missing."

Knowing that it only has limited budget and resources, it's critical that Perfect World gets the price/value equation for its network support correct. And this is where Cisco Smart Net Total Care scored beyond expectation. "We have saved roughly two months worth of labor costs with our new network maintenance process," says the network operations manager. "And with the Smart Net Total Care portal helping us gain complete visibility to network assets, we have more accurate, timely information to resolve problems before they occur."

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Seeing the great value the service provides, the company ultimately decided to increase its overall support spending by two percent. Perfect World anticipates more network growth in the future, so it is confident in Cisco Smart Net Total Care's future return on investment going forward.

Next Steps

Because both Cisco Technical Support Operations Management and Smart Net Total Care deliver such real and immediate value, the company now considers Cisco an even more essential member of the Perfect World support team. Perfect World expects its relationship with Cisco to add even more value in the future, when keeping up with the explosive forecasted growth in the OTT market will again be crucial to the continued success of the company.

For More Information

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

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