Layered Technologies

Company Overview

Layered Technologies, Inc., is a leading global provider of managed dedicated hosting, on-demand virtualization/cloud computing and Web services. By providing high-quality technology, infrastructure and support, Layered Technologies enables customers to eliminate capital expenses and save on operating costs while focusing on core business issues. Layered Technologies' scalable infrastructure powers millions of sites and Internet-enabled applications including e-commerce, software as a service (SaaS), content distribution and more. Its clients range from leading-edge Web 2.0 startups, successful mid-sized enterprises and some the world's largest consultancy and integration firms.

Reasons for Engagement

For Layered Technologies, the company's network is essential to its business. In fact, it is its business, so the company's IT management team is always looking for ways to proactively pre-empt any issues on any piece of equipment that could lead to isolated downtime. In particular, Layered Technologies was interested in a way to help ensure that service assistance with any network equipment issues would be quick, easy to access, and efficient when a Help Desk ticket needed to be pulled with the equipment vendor. The management team also wanted to minimize IT employee hours spent reactively troubleshooting problems so they could spend more of their time on new initiatives and assisting customers.

The company looked to Cisco, because the Smart Call Home feature of their Cisco SMARTnet® Service would enable quicker resolution with network device issues. Smart Call Home provides real-time alerts accompanied by device diagnostics to Cisco experts to expedite support for Smart Call Home-capable switches, routers, and data center products. This proactive diagnostic, alerts, and remediation component of Cisco® SMARTnet Service was exactly what Layered Technologies was looking for in a solution.

The Solution

By activating the Smart Call Home feature, which was available at no additional cost, Layered Technologies had a clear path to enhancing efficiencies for problem resolution on network devices that are key to its business. Curtis Hays, Network Architect with Layered Technologies, activated the Smart Call Home feature on his Catalyst 6500s. Since first activating the service, Layered Technologies has experienced significant changes to how staff are directed to resolve incidents. In one instance, notifications to both Layered Technologies staff and Cisco Technical Assistance Center engineers resulted in less total staff downtime to resolve the issue as a help ticket had proactively been opened for Layered Technologies with Cisco. "Layered Technologies was able to reduce the amount of time that it spent working with Cisco engineers to resolve network issues by 75 percent, from eight hours to two hours," according to Hays. By the time Hays calls Cisco support, the engineer answering the phone already has the incident report and diagnostics from the Smart Call Home system. This shorter time-to-resolution for incidents coming from network devices enabled with

Smart Call Home has allowed Layered Technologies the opportunity to direct staff time to other projects.

Benefits

- **Automatic notification of problems:** The greatest value of Smart Call Home to Layered Technologies is the heightened awareness of problems in network devices as these problems occur. Smart Call Home sends notifications to both Layered Technologies and Cisco Technical Assistance Center staff, making the resolution process much easier. Early warning of issues also means that internal staff, as well as Cisco support, can begin working on problems as soon as they arise. Ongoing device diagnostics results in fewer network disruptions.

- **Reduction in staff IT resolution time:** On a per incidence basis, Layered Technologies has seen a significant decrease in the amount of time that its IT staff has spent working on resolving network issues. Further, the efficiency of interactions has driven much greater satisfaction by Layered Technologies with its network and network products. When network disruptions occur, the dual notification system means that problems are resolved faster, and fewer disruptions are likely to occur.

- **Visibility into the network environment:** Although not an original reason for activating the Cisco Smart Call Home feature, an off-shoot benefit of implementing Smart Call Home for Layered Technologies has been greater visibility and understanding of the company's own network through diagnostic reports on Smart Call Home enabled devices. This insight will help the company plan more effectively and with greater precision for changes or upgrades to the network environment.

Conclusion

Smart Call Home improved issue resolution time on network devices that are key to Layered Technologies' core business. These devices are considered mission-critical networking equipment for its customer base at two major data centers; thousands of websites and email servers; application servers; cloud computing; and grid computing. The Smart Call Home feature, which Layered Technologies first activated in 2008, has resulted in IT staff efficiencies and helped increase the stability of its network environment.

For More Information

For more information about Cisco services, visit www.cisco.com/go/services or contact your Cisco service account manager.

This interview for this story was conducted and documented by Chadwick Martin Bailey, and sponsored by Cisco Systems.

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