Cisco Partner Focuses on Customer Success – and Finds Its Own Success with Smart Net Total Care

Proactive Data Systems Makes the Most of Installed Base Management

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proactive Data Systems
· Cisco Silver Partner
· Delhi, India

Business Challenge
· Unlock the full value of Cisco SNTC
· Provide device lifecycle management
· Ensure full IB visibility
· Prevent customer network risk

Network Solution
· Cisco Smart Net Total Care

Business Results
· Greater operational efficiency
· Improved customer installed base visibility
· Faster problem resolution
· Reduced network risk via proactive network maintenance

Proactive Data Systems is a Cisco Silver Certified Partner located in Delhi, India. Proactive has multiple areas of Cisco network specialization, including Borderless Networks architecture, collaboration, security, mobility, and data center solutions – all marketed under its own services' brand termed ProCare -- for network design, implementation and post-sales support. The partner's efforts on its clients' behalf have been recognized ten times for excellence in Cisco customer satisfaction.

One of Proactive's major customers is a large independent oil and gas exploration company with business interests worldwide. The customer's largest activities are in India, where it has operated as a separate company for fifteen years. Proactive is working with the energy company to maintain its IT infrastructure.

Managing one of the largest energy exploration businesses in India requires a highly reliable network. Strong technical expertise is critical to create transformational growth from the discovery of energy assets to their production as commercial entities. Exploration is intended to provide more information; the energy company then decides what that information might mean for business growth. Helping them maintain the reliability of their network so that critical information is always available is Proactive's responsibility.

Business Challenge

The oil exploration company was already using Cisco Smart Net Total Care (SNTC) when they approached Proactive about ways to improve their network maintenance. The customer believed that SNTC's ability to automatically discover the company's network inventory, analyze the data collected and provide timely, detailed network information such as serial numbers, the status of service entitlement, and End of Life (EOL) and End of Service (EOS) alerts, would dramatically improve their installed base management. But despite the company's commitment to the Cisco solution, they recognized that they were not taking full advantage of Smart Net Total Care to help them manage the lifecycle of the more than 16,000 devices in their network: Renewals were slow due to incomplete device information. IOS versions were often out of date. Hardware upgrades were sporadic due to an absence of easily accessible EOL information. An overall lack of network visibility contributed to these and other issues for the customer. It knew there was a better way. The energy company asked Proactive to help them find it using Smart Net Total Care.

"Smart services is a truly innovative offering that will help further differentiate us with customers. With this secure visibility into a customer's network, we gain actionable intelligence that helps us foresee potential problems before they affect the customer's business. At the same time, it reduces the time and effort."

Rajiv Kumar, Managing Director and CEO, Proactive Data Systems

Network Solution: Proactive is True to Its Name

Working in close collaboration with its customer, Proactive immediately began to understand how Smart Net Total Care could benefit the energy company by taking proactive steps to prevent network problems before they occur. It started with an evaluation of the customer's entire Cisco network made possible by using the Smart Net Total Care portal. The visibility provided by the portal was unprecedented versus previous inventory methods. For example, the available SNTC inventory reports -- seen using one "window" -- contain all service contract information, helping ensure that device service coverage is always current. The ability to track the status of the start date and end date of devices also assists in the governance process pertaining to network audits, helping keep network risk in check. In brief, the reports are assisting Proactive streamline contract management, better meet its Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and manage its Professional Services' engagements with the customer.

Dramatically improved network visibility was just the beginning of Proactive's ability to provide their customer with better lifecycle management. SNTC is helping them in other critical areas as well to meet their SLA requirements:

1. Spares Management
   Previously, the customer relied upon error-prone manual tracking of its network assets. As a result, it was difficult to determine the correct location of a device and/or how many devices were installed at a specific location. Not surprisingly, spare parts were sometimes unavailable or positioned in the wrong location. Now, Proactive can not only see a device and its location, but it can also view the details of any secondary cards. This helps in planning a proper sparing strategy and locating parts in the right place for prompt replacement.

2. IOS Standardization
   Using the SNTC inventory reports, Proactive can determine the current IOS version for a particular router or switch, contrast the information with Cisco bug alerts announcing an IOS upgrade available for the same device, and install the latest version. Additionally, they can take corrective action on all identical devices in the network impacted by the bug to help create a more stable and consistent IOS network environment.

3. Problem Resolution
   Configuration management is an important consideration for smooth network maintenance. Before use of SNTC, Proactive relied upon manual methods to collect inventory information and determine device versions, their running and start-up configurations -- plus related commands. Now, SNTC helps capture this valuable information, which assists the partner's engineers to more quickly troubleshoot problem incidents and speed their resolution.

Business Results: Customer Value Creates Partner Value

In its twenty years of business operations, Proactive's customer-centric focus has helped it build a strong reputation with its clients. In fact, almost 80 percent of the partner's revenue comes from its loyal set of existing customers. The customer benefits achieved in Proactive's initial use of Smart Net Total Care should only help strengthen this loyalty.

> "Smart Net Total Care helps us in budgeting for hardware renewals, upgrades and timely action – so we can avoid last minute surprises!"

Satyendra Kumar Rai, SDM,
Proactive Data Systems

But SNTC isn't just benefiting Proactive's customers. It's also delivering real value for the partner's own business as well. Here a few examples:

1. **Contract Consolidation and Simplified Management**
   Managing multiple service contracts can be a time-consuming process involving the determination of different modules and line cards for either major or minor contracts, tracking SLAs for critical modules, consolidation of zero dollar line items -- and much more. Time spent administrating contracts is time spent away from delivering customer value. Smart Net Total Care has helped Proactive made time spent managing service contracts more valuable in two important ways: 1. Next Business Day (NBD) replacements have been reduced; 2. With better tracking of contracts and related asset information, there is less confusion when answering questions and more overall efficiency in contract management.

2. **Reduction in SLA Breaches**
   SLA breaches can contribute to customer dissatisfaction and lost partner revenue due to the need to offer service credits. Proactive was vulnerable to this issue because it was difficult to determine the SLA for specific chassis or cards that contributed to service delays. With SNTC now in place, the partner can track the SLA details of a particular device, which helps Proactive accurately determine the turnaround time when there's a network emergency, as well as manage the customer's SLA expectations.

3. **Preventative Maintenance**
   Having transparency into a customer's network can pay real dividends when planning for a technology refresh or hardware upgrades. SNTC provides detailed device visibility that wasn't previously available for this opportunity. For example, through analyzing their customer's inventory report, Proactive determined that thirty Cisco Series Model 2700 and 3750 switches were older units that should be upgraded. The customer agreed. Moreover, the upgraded equipment will help them in capacity planning and meeting network expansion. The upgrade was a win/win for the customer and Proactive.

Proactive's early investment in Cisco smart services such as Cisco Smart Care is now paying dividends as they expand the use of Smart Net Total Care for their customers. In fact, Proactive is in the process of introducing Cisco Smart Call Home (SCH) into the network of its energy exploration customer. Smart Call Home comes integrated into SNTC. The partner believes that SCH's ability to proactively detect device problems and expedite their resolution will assist them in better meeting their SLAs. With Smart Net Total Care now helping provide greater operational efficiency, streamlined contract management and improved problem resolution, Proactive's customers can expect even more excellence in managed service delivery in the future.

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Smart Net Total Care, go to: www.cisco.com/go/total
And to learn more about the Proactive Data Systems visit http://www.proactive.co.in/