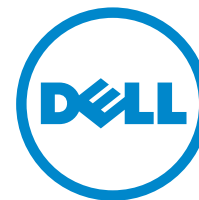


Horizon Business Services increases revenue from hosted security offerings by a projected 75% with Dell PowerConnect services gateway



- Security

Customer Profile

Company:	Horizon Business Services
Industry:	Technology
Country:	United States
Employees:	40
Web:	www.caterease.com

Business Need

Horizon Business Services wanted to improve security with more frequent, less cumbersome firmware updates and cost-effectively expand the number of available hardware ports on its network switches.

Solution

Install **Dell™ PowerConnect™** J-SRX services gateway to consolidate essential security, routing and switching services into a single platform with four times the available hardware ports.

“Replacing our Cisco ASA 5510s with Dell J-SRX240 devices will improve security while saving us a minimum of \$5,000 annually in operational costs, just in updates alone.”

*Jacob Ackerman,
Director Information Technology,
Horizon Business Services*

Pulling off a successful event can be difficult even under the best of circumstances, and making sure the food is hot and ready is just the tip of the iceberg. There are myriad other details that must be attended to: client communications, ingredients sourcing, event shift and staff management. If any piece of the puzzle is out of place, the impact can be embarrassing and damaging to the event holder’s reputation.

Horizon Business Services (**Horizon**) has helped event planners minimize risk and improve efficiency since 1991. Its Caterease software, now available in both desktop and hosted versions, has made countless events more productive and profitable. Horizon’s success in hosting the solution has also allowed the company to expand its business into hosting services beyond its flagship product.

Seeking cost-effective, feature-rich network security

Horizon now hosts Caterease as well as other business-critical applications for local catering companies all the way up to very large customers, such as Margaritaville, Live Nation and the U.S. Air Force. Although technically a small business, Horizon maintains the IT infrastructure of a company 20 times its size. Much of this infrastructure was developed, implemented and is currently managed by Jacob Ackerman, director information technology.

“I’m also our chief network architect, meaning that I oversee everything from our Internet circuits to the servers,” he says. “I do have five technicians in-house, and we have consultants, but for the most part, our IT infrastructure is my responsibility.”



Benefits

- Improved security with more frequent, less cumbersome firmware updates
- 4x the available hardware ports compared to Cisco ASA 5510 devices
- Projected 75% increase in revenue from private firewall customers
- Projected 10-fold faster customer provisioning time
- Projected \$5,000+ annual savings in operational costs
- Supports 64-bit VPN client
- 75% less time to set up client-based VPN

Prior to the network upgrade, Horizon ran its hosting operations out of a co-location facility with three network circuits: two redundant circuits for customer hosting using Cisco ASA 5510 adaptive security appliances, and a management circuit that uses a Cisco ASA 5505. The company sought an enterprise-level network security solution that would improve network security and offer more features than the Cisco products at a better price point. Ackerman also wanted a solution that would support the VPN client on Windows 7 Professional 64-bit operating system running on his Dell Precision M6500 mobile workstation.

"There were two key things that we were unhappy with on the 5510s," Ackerman explains. "The first was expandability of the hardware ports, and the second was the length of time it took to install firmware updates to the devices. Another concern was that Cisco still does not support a 64-bit VPN client. Running a 64-bit operating system is pretty much mandatory for us at this point, so we had to run a virtual OS that was 32 bit and connect up to the VPN that way. Every time I had to do it, it took at least 15 minutes. And it was a hassle, because I couldn't transfer files directly from my PC across the network. I had to transfer them from my PC to my virtual machine and from my virtual machine to the network."

Consolidating network security

Ackerman decided to evaluate the [Dell PowerConnect J-SRX240 services gateway](#), which includes the [Juniper Networks Junos](#) operating system and provides all-in-one secure wide area network (WAN) connectivity, voice over IP (VoIP) security and integrated Ethernet switching. He began the evaluation by replacing the Cisco ASA 5505 in the management circuit

with a Dell J-SRX240, although the ultimate goal was to replace the 5510s. Ackerman installed the device himself. "It's just a simple hardware install," he says. "You have a power cord, a couple of Ethernet cables, and that's pretty much it."

The first thing Ackerman noticed was the number of available hardware ports. "With the Cisco ASA 5510s, we're restricted to four ports unless we pay for an expansion module that is outrageously expensive," he says. "The Dell J-SRX240 comes with 16 hardware ports. The J-SRX just beats the socks off of the ASA—there's just so much more available to it." The J-SRX also supports a 64-bit VPN client, eliminating a hassle of running 32-bit virtual machines to connect. "Setting up the client-based VPN on the J-SRX took 75 percent less time than with the Cisco ASA," says Ackerman.

75% increase in revenue from hosted security offerings

More ports means more money for Horizon, especially when hosting customers want their own personalized, private firewall. "We charge for that, but right now that actually means us buying a Cisco ASA 5505 for every customer, which takes up rack space and consumes power," says Ackerman. "With the number of ports on the J-SRX, we could support eight to ten customers per device. So we would actually make about 75 percent more money per month for customers that want their own private firewall. And we're in a co-lo, so rack space savings equals money savings as well."

Horizon would also be able to provision those customers 10 times faster, Ackerman projects. "The Cisco devices would have to be ordered,

shipped and configured," he says. "They would have to be updated. With the J-SRX in place, we could provision 10 customers in the span of a day versus a month. For a single customer alone, the provisioning time would be cut by 90 percent, easily."

Saving \$5,000 a year in operational costs

Ackerman also expects to save significant time and money in firmware updates by transitioning to the J-SRX devices. "Firmware updates to the ASAs take a significant amount of time, to the point to where we don't update as often as we should," he says. "Updating the J-SRX device took three to four minutes of my time. Granted, it had to install and reboot, but I was able to move on and do other things. With the ASA, every time I update, it takes me an hour and a half to two hours, between finding the update and installing it. Replacing our Cisco ASA 5510s with Dell J-SRX240 devices will improve security while saving us a minimum of \$5,000 annually in operational costs, just in updates alone. With the J-SRX, we will have visibility into any security breach on our network while spending less time managing it."

Technology at Work

Hardware

[Dell™ PowerConnect™ J-SRX240 services gateway](#)

[Dell Precision™ M6500 mobile workstation](#)

Software

[Juniper Networks Junos® operating system](#)

[Windows 7 Professional 64-bit](#)

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