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Case Study



ISP chooses Bandwidth i.Q...

ISP services management

The general model for ISP's is different in that they are in the business of providing bandwidth and related services. This generally means that they use a business case model rather than a pure ROI model in order to justify the purchase of networking equipment.

There are two sides to the ISP needed for networking services. First are their own links to the International and/or local Internet where the focus is on maximizing the use of this generally expensive resource while at the same time attempting to keep service to clients at a level where they can still make a profit without losing dissatisfied clients (churn). Second are the links from the client where historically the link itself was largely self-governing due to speed limitations as would be the case in a dial-up or digital WAN link. Profit in these cases is largely based on a multiplex factor, which simplistically is the number of times the same Internet bandwidth can be resold to clients. In our many years of experience we have seen multiplex factor ranging from highs of over 100 and lows of 2 for quality service but we have never seen an ISP without some level of multiplexing. The business case for these ISP's is also simple. By implementing a transparent cache and proper bandwidth management they can increase the multiplex factor without decreasing service and in most cases even improve service levels. Additional benefits are the ability to enforce sales/service packages and statistics to manage the business with enhanced billing capabilities.

More recently the ISP business model has become more complex. This is driven largely by two main factors. These are the need to differentiate services that add value, and the increasing complexity of client connectivity choices. The first one requires the ability to allow a wide variety of service choices with different levels by time of day and day of week, different local versus International bandwidth, and even different priority levels by type of traffic. In addition new services such as virus scanning, anti-spam, firewall and security management need to be offered in order to keep up with competition as well as increase revenue opportunities. The second factor means that with connections such as wireless, DSL, cable and the like no longer is the incoming link self limiting. For example a client with a wireless connection can connect to the ISP at 11Mbps (or 54Mbps today) but only pay for a 64Kbps link. All of these factors mean that the ISP needs the capability for bandwidth management and QOS, statistics and service levels more than ever and at increasing levels of sophistication.

The Opteq i.Q. products solve all these issues and give ISP's all of these capabilities at a much lower cost than the competition. For this reason the bandwidth i.Q. manager is running in over 1,000 ISP's worldwide today. Two examples are -

Large Satellite ISP

This ISP has a 4Mbps international link to their data centre and resells bandwidth to corporates via VSAT links through regional points of presence (POP's). The original business case and subsequent pricing model was based on a multiplex factor of 4 so they should have been able to sell 16Mbps before running out of capacity. After selling only 21 connections totalling a CIR of less than 2Mbps the link was full and customers were complaining about service and a tender was issued for a bandwidth management solution.



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Opteq and its local partner tendered against Packateer, Sitara, and Allot and won the tender based on the following factors –

- A bandwidth manager feature comparison showed that the Opteq was equal to Packateer in features covered and substantially better than Sitara and Allot.
- The Opteq unit had a much high throughput rating in terms of number of policies and sessions handled and at a lower cost.
- Only the Opteq unit could manage bandwidth in both directions simultaneously on both interfaces. I.e. Managing the Internet link and all the client links in one unit at once.
- The statistics and reporting capability of the Opteq unit were standard features but were add-ons or extra servers from the competition and priced separately.
- The Opteq unit had the ability to add functions later as simple license upgrades.
- The Opteq proposal showed an understanding and ability to assist the ISP at a business level rather than just trying to sell a box.

This pilot has been running successfully for four months now and management now has the statistics and capability to approach each client with a proposal to improve services and manage their bandwidth back to the levels being paid for.

Small Regional ISP

This company original started with an Opteq bandwidth iQ product some two years ago. They were buying local and international bandwidth from a larger ISP at a discount and reselling it to their networking clients. Their added value at the time was to bundle in remote support services, which was attractive to existing clients. The high cost of bandwidth and their inability to manage and get statistics from the ISP was making it difficult to make profits from the service.

Today this ISP is profitable and competing very successfully with the large ISPs and runs its entire infrastructure on Opteq iQ products and is an Opteq International beta site for new products. The products that they are currently using and reselling are –

- Mail services including – POP and IMAP server, anti-relay and anti-spam gateway, blacklist and anti-abuse domain hosting, virus scanning, archiving, and security.
- Security services including – Firewall, NAT, reverse NAT, server redirect and load balancing.
- Caching services including – transparent caching, Content management, and virus scanning of downloads.
- Virtual web hosting.
- IMS and ICQ hosting and gateways to AOL, Yahoo and MSN.

The CEO of the company quotes their ability to offer a broad range of services at a competitive price, excellent service levels, and the ability to allow clients to access and see all their statistics and reports in real-time is what their success is based on.

All about Opteq iQ: Opteq International is acknowledged as an emerging leader in the rapidly evolving world of true network management. We operate according to an independent ethos, remaining inventive, flexible and progressive within a future focused industry. By designing, developing and manufacturing our own proprietary applications on unique hardware server platforms, we retain total control over the quality, performance and reliability of our products. The Opteq flagship product, Opteq iQ, is the unique customised vehicle through which we measurably impact the businesses of our customers by fully capitalising on the investment made in their network. Opteq identifies the existing barriers that prevent your organisation from realising the full potential of your network architecture. The driving idea behind Opteq iQ is to get the most out of our customer's network... to thrive in today's fast-paced, data-intensive economy where our customers depend on the corporate network to be truly responsive and secure. Opteq iQ is designed as a single solution to facilitate the three converging key deliverables of the network management world – Performance, Security and Management. Singular iQ is at the core of our solutions. All of the Opteq iQ application modules reside on, and exploit the rich functionality provided by Singular iQ. With Opteq's Singular iQ, you have all the comprehensive sets of tools and utilities available to enforce true network management within your organisation. This modular architecture fundamentally differentiates the Opteq iQ product set from its competitors and underpins Opteq's approach and philosophy towards managing network infrastructure - end-to-end management, customised for each unique installation, from one transparent solution.