Customer: Global Internet Service Provider

A Case Study from Emerson Network Power

This global Internet Service Provider standardized on Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server technology to increase IT availability which is crucial to business continuity and reputation.

We spoke with one of our customers, a leading global Internet Service Provider (ISP) about its business. As an ISP, its business is 24/7/365 and for its customers, 100% availability is the expectation. Therefore, the data centers that support its business need to be as robust and reliable as possible, with the ability for the data center team to rapidly access, diagnose and repair any outage. To help achieve this model, the company standardized on the Avocent® ACS Console Server Platform for remote management. We asked the company to share with us how it uses the platform and what benefits it gets on the management of its multi-tenant data center structure.

The Challenge

Many of this organization's data center sites are not manned by IT professionals 24/7, however these sites are required to be always up 24/7. Furthermore, these data centers have many different IT infrastructure components to manage, for example servers, storage systems, CISCO and Juniper switches and even tape libraries. This requirement puts a large cost and human resource impact to a business which operates in a highly cost-competitive market.

Solution

The organization decided to implement a remote management system which would allow it to connect, diagnose and fix any data center from anywhere at any time, with guaranteed connectivity, whether through out-of-band or in-band.

Standardizing on One Platform Means Simplicity

The company standardized on the Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server Platform for a number of key reasons.

Firstly, with such a heterogeneous environment, the concept of managing servers through IPMI presents issues such as legacy systems with no IPMI functionality, multiple IPMI platforms to become trained on, multiple password, login details and user permissions to set to record and maintain for each user.

With server vendors coming and going, as with operating systems, updating is necessary whereas standardizing with Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server is a one-time event. In fact, this customer attempted to move away from console server management of its IT devices but it found that doing so is much more complicated having to manage a wide array of devices and returned to console server management.

The customer further claims that the Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server is "the best" to connect with CISCO and Juniper switches.

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Remote Power Cycling of Servers

Another benefit to the customer of the Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server Platform is its ability to connect rack PDUs. Initially, from a basic cost point of view, this saves the company on IP addresses, but more importantly, this allows the user to switch ports while managing the power via the power bars, switching servers or other devices on/off remotely or to lock unused power ports in off state to avoid unexpected power overload situations.

Customization and Reliability

With its LINUX shell scripting capability, the Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server enables the customer to greatly accelerate the management of its connected IT devices by automation of device configurations or using scripts for fault analysis. And as for reliability and return on investment, the customer has some appliances which are over 10 years old, still working strong and never even requiring a reboot.

Summary

For customers with a largely heterogeneous environment where they require remote management of multiple IT devices from multiple vendors, including legacy systems, the Avocent® ACS Advanced Console Server Platform offers some key advantages over traditional methods:

- Guaranteed Access
- Reduced Administration
- Scripting
- An Early Detection Alert System
- Configurable Pinouts
- Cost Savings

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