

Case History:**01.06.06**

Hanson UK

Throughout every organisation, there are three words that resonate with managers as the basis for good business practice – ‘keep it simple’.

Most recently, ‘simplicity’ has become a big issue within IT management where exponential growth in IT complexity is threatening the ability to manage. You know it’s serious when the mighty Gartner focus their annual symposium on ‘Conquering Complexity’ (as was the case last year), with the proclamation that, ‘There are no simple solutions. But there are solutions for simplifying.’

‘Simplicity’ is all that Alex Coleman wanted when, as Support Analyst for Hanson UK, he needed to monitor traffic issues over the organisation’s WAN.

Capacity issues and heavy usage at the network links were causing problems so, within a year, Alex had an MPLS network up and running. In order to monitor traffic, Alex opted for a better-known management tool with heaps of features and functionality but also a user manual big enough to impress Tolstoy. After getting to grips with the software, Alex still could not get the visibility he needed. Being a Cisco network, management through the command line interface was another option though, as we all know, not the most user-friendly.

Alex had never heard of the ManageEngine range of software tools but, when a colleague recommended them, Alex downloaded a free trial of Netflow Analyzer and gave it a go. Impressed by the quality of the software, the features, the reporting and, above all, the simplicity of deployment, Alex braced himself as he looked up the price for a licence to cover 150 interfaces.

“I was stunned. The price was a fraction of my expectations. We had judged the product only on its technical capabilities and it came out tops compared to some of the so-called market leaders. When we saw the price, that clinched it.”

“Netflow Analyzer is perfect for our Cisco network and greatly simplifies the task of monitoring network utilisation by application and by user. We have lots of connections worldwide, including 500 sites in the UK alone. Some have bigger links than others, so we use Netflow Analyzer to monitor the important ones and to respond to ad hoc issues that pop up elsewhere on the network. The software is very sound and I’ve no doubts about it scaling up as required in the future.”

Looking to the future, Alex sees the role of Netflow Analyzer growing:

“I’m looking forward to the new upgrade of Cisco IOS which will allow monitoring of Netflow data at switches, not just routers. This will give us more granular visibility and should give us an even better understanding of network utilisation.”

No doubt, Alex will also be interested to learn of some news hot of the press: Netflow Analyzer now supports Cisco NBAR (Network Based Application Recognition) an intelligent classification engine that can provide real time analysis of a wide variety of applications, including Web-based and client/server applications.

Hanson UK

Hanson’s UK business is split into two operating companies – Hanson Building Products and Hanson Aggregates.

Hanson Building Products is the UK’s largest brick maker and a leading manufacturer of lightweight and dense concrete blocks and specialist precast concrete structures and flooring systems. The division also produces a range of bagged aggregates and decorative and hard landscaping products.

Hanson Aggregates produces crushed rock, sand and gravel from the land and the sea, asphalt and Premix concrete from more than 500 operations. The division incorporates Hanson Construction Projects, a national contracting business specialising in road surfacing and infrastructure work.



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