

Serbian ISP Introduces Tiered Services and Lowers Operating Costs

EUnet extends provider’s market leadership with Service Control technology, improved monitoring, and interactive Web portal.

Business Challenges

Originally named EUnet Yugoslavia, EUnet was founded in 1995 as part of the EUnet International community of Internet providers. The company has continued to thrive and grow its business in what is now the country of Serbia.

EUnet pioneered this market, as the first service provider in the area, and today owns and operates a powerful network infrastructure in 13 cities. The company’s core network connects to the Internet over a redundant terrestrial link (300 Mb/s in bandwidth). Subscribers have access from the local telcos, and EUnet also serves wholesale customers. Partnering with leading technology vendors, telcos, and IT companies has contributed to the company’s aggressive growth rate and installed base of 180,000 residential and 15,000 business clients. Subscribers represent residents, government agencies, educational and cultural institutions, banks, media houses, and other corporations and entities.

Quality, reliability, and a comprehensive portfolio of services have set the company apart from competitors. Customers can choose dialup or ADSL broadband access, and business customers have a choice of leased lines, Web hosting, dedicated servers, collocation, and application development services. EUnet gives 24-hour technical support to all customers.

“In terms of initial capital investment, it is very easy to start your own [service provider business] in Serbia today,” says Bosko Radivojevic, CTO of EUnet. “EUnet’s reputation has been built on quality of service and being the first to offer innovative new capabilities to our subscribers. When we began to grow our broadband business, we realized that we were lacking the capabilities that we would need to continue this lead. In particular, we wanted to give our business customers the ability to change service levels from basic to silver and gold premier levels or to easily ‘turn on’ extra bandwidth when needed for voice, VPNs, or gaming. We also needed to monitor traffic and optimize service for these users.”

“Serbia is a very competitive market. With the Cisco SCE 2020 and the resulting improvements in customer experience, EUnet is able to maintain leadership in this ISP market and further our reputation for innovation.”

– Bosko Radivojevic, CTO, EUnet

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EUnet

- Industry: Internet Service Provider
- Location: Serbia
- Number of Employees: 130

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Maintain competitive differentiation with industry-leading technology and services
- Introduce service levels to give customers more choice and help ensure bandwidth for premier user traffic
- Reduce operating costs by minimizing demands on call center
- Utilize existing investments in current network

NETWORK SOLUTIONS

- Cisco Service Control Engine (SCE) 2020
- Connection to existing billing and accounting systems (back office), with Web portal added for service-level changes
- Noninvasive packet-level inspection
- Basic, silver, and gold levels of service – traffic analysis and management capabilities to meet service-level agreements for all levels

BUSINESS RESULTS

- First ISP in Serbia to introduce service control (reinforcing leadership position)
- Reduced customer turnover rate with improved customer service (24-hour access to Web portal for easy service-level adjustments)
- Ability to attract new customers with premium service levels (increased revenue)
- Improved profit margins (reduced call center calls; increased subscriber base on existing infrastructure)

Network Solutions

Setting out to gain the ability to manage and optimize differentiated levels of service, EUnet defined its project goals to include:

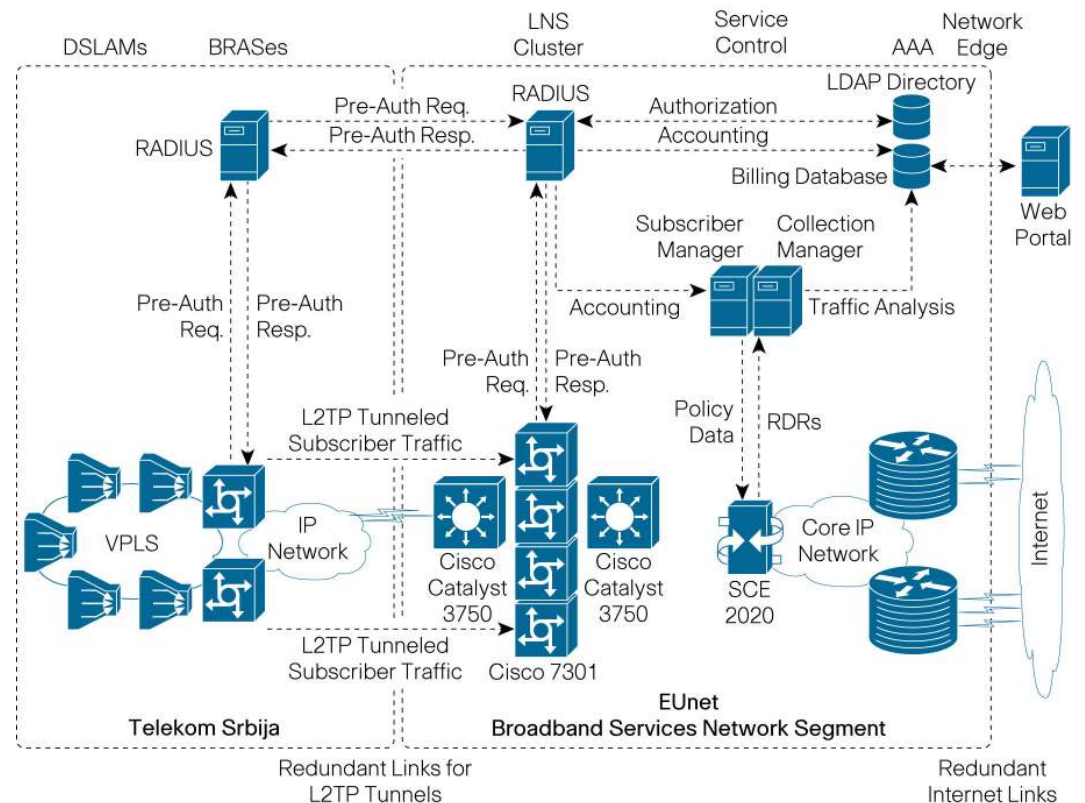
- Increase profit margins: EUnet expected service differentiation to attract new customers, and yet wanted to be able to support the expanding subscriber base on the same network infrastructure and without adding additional staff to the call center that handled customer service requests.
- Enhance the overall customer experience: Being able to optimize each user's experience also included the need for online Web-based service requests to give users a convenient, fast way to make changes to their tariff and service profiles, take advantage of limited-time promotional offers, and provide feedback to marketing and support teams.
- Provide a trial service to prospective customers: By making it easy for customers of competitors to test out broadband connections to the EUnet core, the company hoped to attract new subscribers.
- Integrate with the existing back office systems: Control of operating costs also required that the solution integrate with the in-place information and billing systems.

EUnet also set out to protect its total network investments, which included research and development (R&D) and network operations center (NOC) as well as metro networks throughout Serbia. The IT organization, as part of its due diligence, evaluated all of the major vendors in the DPI market. As a trusted partner with a successful long-term relationship, Cisco® was included and eventually selected as the solution provider because of the leading technology and capabilities of the Cisco Service Control Engine (SCE) 2020 platform (see Figure 1).

"EUnet is a very technology-driven ISP," says Radivojevic. "The Cisco SCE 2020 as a product and a solution inspired us with many possibilities. The performance, scalability, and manageability also impressed us."

The Cisco SCE 2020 high-performance, purpose-built traffic metering and control device gives EUnet the ability to track subscriber traffic patterns, manage network bandwidth resources, and expand the company's service differentiation. Its packet flow optimization analysis technology allows for noninvasive detection and management of virtually any network application. The result is overall reduction of network congestion and an optimized user experience without costly network upgrades. Now, with improved application monitoring and subscriber awareness, EUnet has the foundation to deploy tiers of service that can be based on content and premium IP service delivery.

Linked to the Cisco SCE, a new self-provisioning Web portal has also been added to the EUnet network. This gives customers 24-hour access for changing service parameters in real time.

Figure 1. EUnet Core Network with the Cisco SCE 2020 for Service Control

Business Results

“Without any major changes in our infrastructure, we can now manage our customers’ traffic and optimize our different levels of service,” says Radivojevic. “We have introduced new levels of monitoring for our management teams, and can gain insight into our customer’s service patterns, as well as help ensure that we are meeting the service-level agreements for basic, silver, and gold customers. Even if we oversell some areas, the SCE 2020 allows us to avoid costly buildouts by giving us many options for allocating bandwidth and managing service.”

With its new Web portal, EUnet cut operating costs for its call center. More significantly, the trial service offering and other promotions being extended to customers on the portal have attracted new customers and increased service uptake among the base – adding up to increased revenue. Margins have increased since the existing infrastructure is now supporting an expanded subscriber base, and by giving existing customers a more convenient and fast way to adjust their service, the portal has also reduced customer turnover.

PRODUCT LIST

Routing and Switching

- Cisco SCE 2020

“Serbia is a very competitive market,” says Radivojevic. “With the Cisco SCE 2020 and the resulting improvements in customer experience, EUnet is able to maintain leadership in this ISP market and further our reputation for innovation.”

For More Information

To find out more about the Cisco SCE 2000 Series Service Control Engine, go to:

http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps6151/prod_literature.html



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