

Handelsbanken Group Uses Cisco Routers and SNA Switching Services to Eliminate Outdated Network

As one of Scandinavia's most successful banks, Handelsbanken Group knows a good investment when it sees one. With 550 branches spanning Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Great Britain, the cost and logistics of maintaining separate networks for the bank's mission-critical SNA and IP applications was enormous. Investing in Cisco SNA Switching Services (SNASw) netted the bank a faster, more reliable network that is paying off in real dollars, too.

Handelsbanken's two mirrored data centers in Stockholm support Frame Relay network traffic from 450 branch locations in Sweden. According to Lars Wibeck, Handelsbanken's manager of communications, the bank struggled to maintain two separate networks. An older SNA-based network used IBM 3745s as concentrators at seven locations in Sweden and supported the mission-critical bank transactions. A newer IP-based network was used primarily for e-mail and Internet access. "This obviously resulted in double the cost—not only in pure line costs, but also in resources to handle the two networks," Wibeck says.

Handelsbanken's goal was to integrate the legacy SNA network into the new IP network, giving the bank only one network to manage and fund. Wibeck says the staff first considered Cisco Data-Link Switching Plus (DLSw+), but they soon discovered that SNASw was a better fit for their new network. Because SNASw provides for load balancing and redundancy when there are multiple mainframes, it was the obvious choice for their Parallel Sysplex-based mainframe environment.

Cisco experts helped Handelsbanken implement the new network. With Cisco Catalyst[®] switches and Cisco 2611XM Multiservice routers using Frame Relay network connection in the branches, SNASw uses Enterprise Extender's native IP transport of SNA data to send the bank's transaction data across an IP backbone. In Stockholm, two data centers use Cisco 7200 Series routers with an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) interface to the network and a Gigabit Ethernet connection to the mainframe, creating a network with blistering speed. Even without the costly and outdated SNA networking equipment, the bank and all of its branches can continue to use its mission-critical SNA applications.

Wibeck is pleased with the results, "The implementation met all our requirements—we have closed down the local concentrators, closed down the SNA network, and now only have one network to handle." Wibeck adds that the investment in a faster, more reliable, and more modern network paid off in other ways also: "It is difficult to give an exact figure, but in all the savings are around \$1 million a year."

Internetworking Topology

- IBM mainframes and servers

Cisco Systems Products

- Cisco 1700, 2500, 2600, 3600, 7200 Series routers
- Cisco Catalyst 1900, 2950, 3500, 4000, 4500, 6500 Series switches

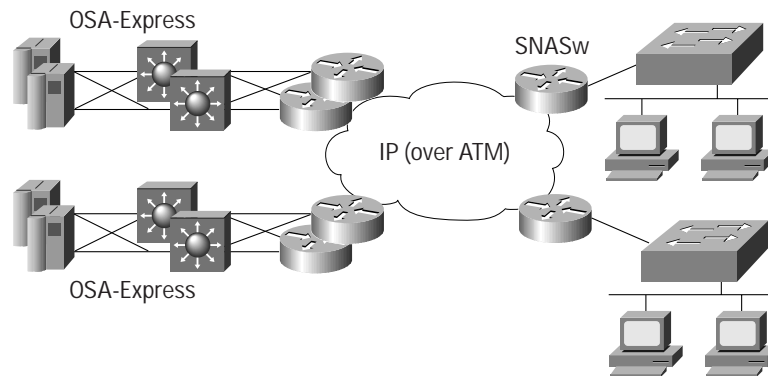
Protocols

- TCP/IP

Network Interfaces

- Frame Relay
- ATM

Handelsbanken's new high-speed, redundant network saves the company approximately \$1 million a year and provides load balancing for its Parallel Sysplex environment.



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