

Employees' Experience of Data Center 3.0: Faster Applications

As agencies recentralize their data centers, a trend called Data Center 3.0, the most visible benefit for employees is noticeably improved application performance – and not just for people who work at headquarters. “New application networking services speed up application performance for people who traditionally have had to make do with less: mobile employees, teleworkers, and remote field workers,” says Steve Picot, regional manager, federal data center team, Cisco. “This is a critical capability for empowering the government workforce.”

Fast Performance for People at the “Thin End of the Wire”

The Peace Corps, for example, works to provide network services to people in remote areas with slow network connections. Accessing photos, maps, research data, e-mail, and other content needed for working, living, and playing used to be painfully slow – if possible at all. Now Peace Corps workers can access content housed on distant servers almost as fast as they could if they were local. What makes it possible is Cisco® Wide-Area Application Services (WAAS), which optimize the performance of applications delivered over wide-area networks. This enables agencies to recentralize servers, storage, and applications and make them available to remote users with LAN-like performance.

Empowering the Mobile Workforce

Enhanced application delivery especially empowers government's mobile workers and teleworkers. “People who are connected to the agency network download 20MB files without thinking twice,” says Picot, “but large files become a problem for people using home broadband connections.” With Cisco WAAS Mobile software on their home PCs or laptops, teleworkers can download large files nearly as fast as they could with a LAN connection.

Accommodating Large User Populations or Transaction Volumes

Application networking services also make it possible to accommodate higher transaction volumes that result from centralized services. This was the challenge that Scott Air Force Base faced when it wanted to give all current and past employees an e-mail address that they can keep for life. To achieve the necessary scale, the IT group consolidated e-mail servers and storage and used Cisco Application Control Engine (ACE) modules for load balancing and security. The Cisco ACE modules fit right into existing data center switches, avoiding additional data center space and power requirements and minimizing capital expense.

Enabling Web 2.0

Yet another way that application networking services empower government workers is by enhancing the performance of Web 2.0 applications, sometimes called Web services or Software as a Service (SaaS). Web 2.0 uses XML [eXtensible Markup Language] to integrate multiple applications in creative and useful ways. One example is combining results from different systems in a single format, as seen in mapping applications. Another is wikis, which are shared workspaces used for processes ranging from collaboration and record keeping to disaster relief coordination

and information sharing within the intelligence community. "Web 2.0 application development can be challenging because XML tends to slow down applications and requires proper precautions to avoid security risks," Picot says. Now agencies can more easily and confidently deploy Web 2.0 applications using the Cisco ACE XML Gateway, which accelerates XML application performance and also provides security in a single, easy-to-manage device.

Cisco Application Networking Solutions

As part of its Data Center 3.0 portfolio, Cisco offers a suite of Application Networking Services (ANS) that accelerate, secure, and maximize the availability of mission-critical applications.

For more information, visit: www.cisco.com/go/optimizemyapp



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