Wi-Fi Means Rapid Growth for Mobile Advertising Innovator

Early adoption of bring-your-own-device for mobile staff worldwide makes Velti more agile and secure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Velti

Industry: Media

Location: Global

Number of Employees: 900

Challenge
· Enhance business agility through quicker set-up of new offices anywhere
· Decrease provisioning time for mobile workforce and reduce capital expenditure
· Accelerate secure collaboration and communication within and between offices

Solution
· Cisco Identity Services Engine
· Cisco Wireless Controllers
· Cisco AnyConnect

Results
· Worldwide office presence almost doubles in size; provisioning time cut by 75 percent
· People use BYOD to access same systems in any Velti office across the world, improving workforce agility and efficiency
· Centralized authentication provides data visibility for 17 offices on a single screen, while reducing administration by five hours a week

Challenge

As mobile device numbers pull ahead of world population, the mobile marketing industry is growing very quickly. Velti has emerged as a leading player in this global boom, providing mobile advertising technology and solutions. These enable brands, advertising agencies, mobile operators, and media to implement highly targeted, interactive, and measurable campaigns by communicating with and engaging consumers via their mobile devices.

Innovation is central to the company's ethos. With more than 10 sites worldwide, Velti needs to get new offices up and running quickly to maintain agility and support a large number of remote workers. The Velti workforce of around 900 moves around frequently, both between and within offices. Secure mobility and ease of connection are at a premium.

Velti was an early adopter of bring-your-own-device (BYOD), allowing employees to bring to work any device they want. The rationale was to stimulate innovation and offer tangible support to the aspirations of young employees. Before these objectives could be attained, however, the company needed to be certain that its mobile business model was secure, with full transparency of a high number of users who were frequently changing location.

Solution

The Velti global wide area network is built on a Cisco® Borderless Network architecture using Cisco 2851, 2921, and 3945 Series Integrated Service Routers. Cisco Catalyst® 2960, 3560, and 3750 Series Switches are deployed in the local area network (LAN) with more than 70 Cisco Aironet® 1100 Series Wireless Access Points worldwide. The solution also includes Cisco AnyConnect® secure mobility client along with Cisco WebEx® and Cisco Jabber™ with Cisco Unified Communications Manager (UCM) and Cisco UCM Express.

"Cisco is the main platform for connecting everything at Velti. It links with the outside world, and it's the gateway for all our inter-office communications," says Anthony Hassiotis, senior network manager at Velti. "Cisco has developed product lines that can interoperate in so many ways, so the overall performance of the system is brilliant."

> "It's important for visiting employees to be able to use the systems they have in their own offices at the other side of the world. They use the same access card to get in, and the wireless system is transparent to the BYOD user, while people also have easy access to their normal IP phone extensions wherever they are."

Anthony Hassiotis
Senior Network Manager
Velti

Cisco AnyConnect was installed on mobile devices to enable connection over a VPN from anywhere with Wi-Fi or 3G links. Cisco IP desk phones in Velti offices are integrated with mobile devices, so that both devices ring when a call comes in, and office phones can be reached from mobiles using a four-digit code.

"AnyConnect allows us to connect over VPN mainly, so we can use Cisco Jabber," says Hassiotis. "It's very useful to be able to carry your office extension on your mobile, and it gives people freedom to work productively from anywhere." Among Jabber's capabilities are presence, instant messaging (IM), voice, video, voice messaging, desktop sharing, and conferencing. It also provides smooth integration of desk phones and mobiles.

Velti uses Cisco WebEx predominantly for client meetings and collaboration across multiple locations. "We use our WebEx accounts when we want to make sure that things unite smoothly for communications coming in from all over the place," Hassiotis says.

With the launch of BYOD, top priorities for the Velti IT department were centralized authentication, visibility of devices and users, reduced troubleshooting, and less administrative labor in the set-up and management of guest accounts. The company wanted to see who was connecting, on what device, where, and for what reason, to secure its wireless networks for continued expansion. Trust in the quality and performance of Cisco solutions meant that Velti chose the Cisco Identity Service Engine (ISE) to achieve its BYOD objectives.

Velti deployed two ISE servers, with the primary device in Athens and the back-up in London. Reporting functions are monitored in Athens, but can easily be switched between the two locations. Cisco 5508 Series Wireless Controllers were installed in ten offices, adding remote connections to existing wireless controllers at smaller establishments, and the Cisco ISE platform was extended across all wireless networks.

Results

Business agility for Velti has been much enhanced by the new solution. It enables new office premises to go live more swiftly, so the business stays ahead of the fast-changing global marketplace and capitalizes on new opportunities. Velti has nearly doubled its worldwide office count since the Cisco ISE solution was implemented. At the same time, ISE provides secure support to people working from home offices in far-flung locations.

"It's definitely a quicker working model," says Anthony Hassiotis. "We now have a unified system that connects everyone together. Previously, when we wanted to open a new office, we had to call in someone local to set up the access points one at a time. Now we can configure them remotely. A big office with 12 access points used to take us up to a day-and-a-half to prepare; now it takes just two to three hours."

Along with reductions in the time and costs of provisioning, Velti has noticed a significant uplift in overall wireless quality since installing Cisco wireless controllers. "With the Cisco 5508 devices in place, we've seen much better quality than we had with the previous standalone solution: better roaming, better quality everywhere," says Hassiotis.

The network is able to offer the same look and feel throughout. "It's important for visiting employees to be able to use the systems they have in their own offices at the other side of the world," says Hassiotis. "They use the same access card to get in, and the wireless system is transparent to the BYOD user, while people also have easy access to their normal IP phone extensions wherever they are."

From an IT perspective, the Cisco ISE solution means it's quicker and easier to identify mobile devices and users on the network. Instead of cumbersome checks on MAC and IP addresses, then matching them to the user, all the information is immediately available. "We're inherently more secure, which means we don't have to worry so much," says Hassiotis.

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Anthony Hassiotis
Senior Network Manager
Velti

Network transparency and simplification have allowed the number of service set identifiers (SSIDs) in play to be cut by two-thirds. Velti now has just two SSIDs, for corporate users and guests, respectively. This arrangement allows the IT team to hand off the task of setting up BYOD guest access to the administration department, reducing IT support by around five hours a week.

"The ISE solution is great for us," Hassiotis sums up. "We have centralized authentication with the right security to allow users to be mobile in their own office or in a different office. We can easily monitor authentication and wireless quality, and we can see historic data at a glance, which is very important. All data for all offices is displayed on a single screen."

Next Steps

The company now plans to extend the scope of ISE to provide full coverage, to benefit from better visibility and control across its whole fixed and mobile network estate. Meanwhile a demonstration of the Cisco Prime network control platform will explore further wireless monitoring enhancements. The company also hopes to integrate Cisco ISE at the network edge to enforce common global policies. And it has plans for a test of Cisco TelePresence® to enhance board-level collaboration at its three largest offices.

For More Information

This case study was conducted by Cisco on 11 July 2013 at Velti in relation to Cisco's equipment and network systems used by the company. To learn more about these Cisco architectures and solutions, go to: www.cisco.com/go/ise

Product List

Routing and Switching
- Cisco ISR 3945, 2921, 2851 Series Integrated Service Routers
- Cisco Catalyst 2960, 3560, 3750 Series Switches

Wireless
- Cisco Aironet 1131, 1141, 1142, 1362 Series Wireless Access Points
- Cisco 5508, 2504 Series Wireless LAN Controllers

Management and Security
- Cisco Identity Services Engine

Collaboration
- Cisco Unified Communications Manager and UCM Express
- Cisco WebEx
- Cisco Jabber

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