

How Cisco IT Uses SAN to Automate the Legal Discovery Process

Cisco dramatically reduces the cost of legal discovery through better data management.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- 64 percent reduction in litigation expenses
- The ability to add capacity cheaply and easily
- The ability to share information without security concerns
- The capability to handle growth without increasing headcount

“...we quickly saw the tremendous potential of the Cisco SAN switch, which allows us to grow it easily in response to future discovery needs.”

– Jeff Ghielmetti, manager of computer forensics and legal discovery

Large enterprises typically produce, collect, and analyze large volumes of data during day-to-day operations. Corporate legal departments are no exception, particularly those involved in the discovery process for litigation and regulatory disclosure. In enterprises like Cisco Systems, the amount of discovery data for a single case can be staggering. Mining many different network storage devices and preparing the resultant data for legal review is a daily activity. 10 to 15 years ago, virtually all discovery-related information was paper-based. Now, at Cisco, 90 percent of that information is in electronic form, but the challenges in getting it ready for review are very similar.

The biggest challenge facing the Cisco litigation team is the need to store, organize, and process huge volumes of data. A related challenge, once data is assembled, is to retrieve specific information quickly.

Cisco's used its own technology to build a large storage system that was easy to install, configure, and manage. The system links Cisco, litigation support consultants, and outside counsel through a storage area network (SAN) built on a Cisco MDS 9000 Family multilayer switch and a powerful, low-cost storage system. Essentially, the architecture is a “network of networks.”

The Cisco e-discovery system architecture can be grown easily in response to future needs. A SAN management application allows users to “see” data as one large volume that can be increased in size by simply adding data disks.

The system is highly secure. The entire fabric of the SAN is smoothly integrated with Cisco network security and the firewalls of Cisco's outside counsel, enabling discovery partners to share data without concern.

The Office of the General Counsel has reduced its expenses. As of the writing of this case study, Cisco has been able to reduce its discovery costs by approximately 97 percent—for an overall reduction in litigation expenses of 64 percent.

Case Study: http://www.cisco.com/web/about/ciscoit/work/case_studies/storage_networking_dl4.html

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read the entire case study or for additional Cisco IT case studies on a variety of business solutions, visit Cisco on Cisco: Inside Cisco IT www.cisco.com/go/ciscoit

NOTE

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