Gigamon® The Smart Route To Visibility

Case Study: Gigamon Resolves Security Issues for Large Cable Firm with GigaVUE's Authenticated Integrated TAPs

"GigaVUE extends total visibility across the entire network, allowing any monitoring tool to be connected to any data source at any speed at any time"

Patrick Leong – CTO, Gigamon

Challenge:

- Channel network data flexibly and securely to a wide range of monitoring tools

Resolution:

- GigaVUE data access switch from Gigamon

Benefits:

- Increased tool efficiency with immediate return on investment
- Universal TAP capability for easy access to any data
- Flexibility to aggregate, filter, and distribute data as needed

Introduction

This company is a leading provider of cable, entertainment, and communications services with millions of cable, high-speed Internet, and digital voice customers.

Business Challenge:

Different departments within the company had their own network monitoring tools. Everyone wanted access to the same data streams through SPAN ports or TAPs. But SPAN ports were limited, creating port contention among monitoring tools. And dropped packets were an ongoing problem associated with 10 GigE SPAN ports. Furthermore, mirroring often caused packets to be re-timed, resulting in inaccurate performance monitoring statistics. The company could gather more accurate traffic data through multiple TAPs, but that required costly and time-consuming manual aggregation of data.

While SPAN ports and TAPs provided access to the data stream, legacy tools running at 1 GigE couldn't keep up with the 10 Gbps traffic, filtering only those packets being monitored and discarding the others. Purchasing new, higher-speed tools would be very costly.

Security was another issue. Privacy concerns demanded that access to various types of data, such as E911 calls and Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA) lawful intercept, be granted only to those who were authorized. TAPs, however, allowed any staff member to connect to the data stream without authorization or authentication, putting the company at risk of noncompliance and possible fines.

Resolution:

After searching for a workable solution, the company found the GigaVUE Data Access Switch from Gigamon. GigaVUE simplifies the deployment and use of multiple monitoring tools in networks, providing secure aggregation, replication, and filtering of critical network traffic. GigaVUE enables full network visibility to all categories of passive monitoring tools.

With only a minimum of configuration assistance needed from Gigamon engineers, the company deployed a total of 36 GigaVUE 2404 high-density Data Access Switches flexibly connected to a wide variety of network monitoring tools.

GigaVUE's stackable chassis provides nearly unlimited scalability, eliminating port contention from mirrored or span ports when multiple tool connections are required. Installing GigaVUE Data Access Switches enabled the company to secure sensitive data, relieve port contention, and aggregate and filter traffic as needed with no dropped packets.

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Conclusion

Benefit:

Gigamon has eliminated virtually all of the network monitoring issues this company once faced, increasing tool efficiency and generating an immediate return on investment.

Installing multiple TAPs on each link to satisfy access needs for multiple departments had previously created availability issues. The Gigamon solution gave the company a 'Universal TAP', eliminating port contention. Data from a single TAP per link is passed through the GigaVUE Data Access Switch, giving multiple departments the access they need to the same data stream without affecting each other's port configurations.

With GigaVUE, the company can now easily retrieve data from high-speed ports, including 10 GigE, and filter and send it to monitoring tools with lower-speed interfaces. This has extended the life of existing monitoring tools and saved the sizable cost of purchasing newer high-speed tools.

As a Universal TAP in the network, Gigamon allows a single security administrator for all tools to set filters to control who can access specific types of information, protecting sensitive data such as E911 and CALEA and ensuring regulatory compliance.

The company had commonly deployed expensive probes to assess Quality of Service (QoS) and other network performance metrics. Though capable of handling data streams up to 600 Mbps, these probes were deployed on 200 Mbps links. GigaVUE was able to aggregate three 200 Mbps streams and channel them into a single probe, enabling the company to redeploy tools and/or lower their tool count by two-thirds.

Accurately monitoring VoIP traffic for jitter, R-Factor, MOS scoring and other performance statistics requires gathering data from multiple TAPs. Gigamon has enabled the company to aggregate disparate data streams instantly and accurately, eliminating the expensive and time-consuming manualaggregation process.

Digital voice, the company's fastest growing service offering, will see its monitoring infrastructure undergo continuous change and expansion over time. GigaVUE provides flexibility in connecting and discon¬necting tools in a production environment, streamlining network operation by dramatically reducing the need for change management and scheduling maintenance windows.

GigaVUE has enabled this company to effectively monitor its network in near real time, ensuring a higher level of availability, which in turn has resulted in higher customer satisfaction. Now technicians can view just the data they want when they want it. GigaVUE's robust, scalable platform will be able to meet the company's needs for years to come.

About Gigamon:

Gigamon® provides purpose-built appliances to enable visibility and deliver critical packet-flow information across data networking infrastructures. As creator and leader of the Intelligent Data Access Networking® architecture, Gigamon's patented technology provides secure access and enhanced visibility for traditional and cloud-based data networks. The GigaVUE® line of intelligent data access switches eliminate SPAN port contentions, extend legacy tool utilization within 10Gbps environments, and enhance the effectiveness and productivity of network monitoring and security tools – all while running at full line rate speeds. This provides seamless and controlled delivery of the right data, at the right time, to the right tools; benefiting customers with greater uptime, reduced vulnerability to threats, and improved regulatory compliance. Founded in 2004, Gigamon has sold thousands of units to customers in more than 40 countries around the globe.

For more information about our Gigamon products
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