

CASE STUDY: HEINEKEN

Heineken Upgrades with Foundry to Keep Profits Flowing



SUMMARY

The Heineken Group is one of the world's largest and most advanced brewers. The Heineken brand has the widest global presence of any international beer brand and ranks as the largest in Europe; Amstel is the company's other principal mainstream brand. A majority of Heineken's brewing and bottling — including all exports to the United States — takes place at three facilities in The Netherlands. The IT infrastructure for these plants, particularly the network that supports them plus two offices, plays a crucial role in ensuring that the Heineken and Amstel brands deliver on their promise.

OBJECTIVE

“All our core business processes are connected to and linked via the network — from brewing, bottling, packaging and distribution to administration, marketing and communications,” explains Heineken's Manager of Services and Support, Roland Hermsen. “The network helps power those processes, and, more importantly, ensures that those processes can take place 24/7 with no risk of downtime or fallout. Our facilities in Zoeterwoude, Den Bosch, and Wylre operate around the clock to produce and package 16 million hectoliters [of beer] a year. We simply can't afford to have any part of the operation stand still. A robust, reliable network plays a central role in delivering on the brands' promise.”

Reliability was Heineken's number one priority when the company redesigned its network infrastructure and replaced existing hardware with Foundry Networks equipment. Heineken's existing infrastructure consisted of a shared Layer 2 Ethernet network, whose architecture and 10 Mb Ethernet hardware provided insufficient fault isolation. A problem at one location could propagate itself across the network and potentially take it down completely — an unacceptable risk at the breweries. The second set of priorities driving Heineken's decision-making process involved total cost of ownership considerations. To ensure that the brands deliver on their financial performance goals, Hermsen sought a solution that provided cost-efficient and effective management, control and protection of the network. Heineken also asked its new partner, Foundry Networks, to provide an infrastructure that would deliver innovation and expansion in the foreseeable future. Heineken sought a future-proof solution.

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INDUSTRY

Food-Beverages

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Building upon the success of its flagship Heineken brand beer, the Heineken Group is one of the world's largest and most advanced brewers. Positioned as a premium lager, the Heineken brand has the widest global presence of any international beer brand and ranks as the largest beer brand in Europe. Amstel, Europe's third-largest beer brand, accompanies Heineken in the portfolio as the company's principal mainstream brand.

OBJECTIVES

- Replace 10 Mb, shared, Layer 2 Ethernet network with more fault-tolerant switched 10/100 Mb Ethernet infrastructure
- Establish cost-efficient and effective management, control, and protection of the network
- Implement an expandable, future-proof network solution

SOLUTIONS

- Foundry BigIron IP hybrid switch/routers at each production and office location, for complete redundancy and 99.999 percent availability
- Foundry's stackable FastIron Edge switches drive automated processes at the brewery plants
- sFlow monitoring and management technology traces traffic and controls user behavior

RESULTS

- Redundant, highly available network ensures that mission-critical processes are available 24/7
- Switched 10/100 Ethernet isolates faults and keeps network functioning
- sFlow technology drives down IT management and ownership costs

SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

To meet Heineken's strict "always on" requirements, Foundry Networks helped Heineken replace the existing shared network with a switched 10/100 Mb Ethernet infrastructure. Heineken installed two to six modular BigIron® IP switches as the core at each production and office location. The zero-outage architecture of these hybrid switch/routers ensures that the hardware delivers on its reliability promise by providing complete redundancy and 99.999 percent availability. Each set of BigIron switches is connected via Gigabit Ethernet links using stackable FastIron® Edge switches to servers, workstations and the programmable logic controllers (PLCs) driving automated processes such as brewing, bottling, and packaging at the plants.

All the Foundry equipment contains sFlow monitoring and management technology, which allows Heineken's operations services manager to view network traffic as if he had a probe installed on every port along the network, enabling him to trace traffic, control user behavior, and grant or deny access to defined parts of the network.

THE RESULTS

By facilitating management and control from a single location, the sFlow technology helps boost financial performance by driving down overall IT management and ownership costs.

"The new campus-based network and Foundry's robust equipment and technology have given us what we need: easy, transparent management; cost efficiency; and, above all, reliable performance," says Hermsen. "Foundry's infrastructure should help us meet our performance criteria now and in the years to come. Looking toward the future, we expect to see increased mobility requirements within our workforce, as well a growing demand for IP telephony. Foundry has developed a strong Wi-Fi proposition that should help us meet those needs without compromising the overall mission or security of the network. We look forward to exploring those growth opportunities with Foundry."

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— Roland Hermsen
Manager of Services and Support,
Heineken

FOUNDRY NETWORKS

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