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HN HostedNetwork

HOSTED NETWORK AND JUNIPER MAKE SELLING CLOUD SERVICES EASY FOR AUSTRALIAN MSPs

Summary

Company:
Hosted Network

Industry:
Service Provider

Business Challenges:
Provide white-label cloud services to Australian managed service providers

Technology Solution:
- *MX Series 5G Universal Routing Platforms*
- *SRX Series Services Gateways*

Business Results:
- *Improved network reliability and performance for MSPs*
- *Created multiple, revenue-generating cloud-based products that MSPs can offer directly to customers*
- *Streamlined product and services installation and configuration with automation*
- *Helped customers grow their businesses with streamlined provisioning*

Australia is home to a rich and varied group of managed service providers (MSPs), and more than 150 of those MSPs are customers of Hosted Network. MSPs are the Internet lifeline for the country's thousands of SMBs that need broadband and Wi-Fi to serve their office spaces and customers.

In the early 2000s, Hosted Network counted itself as an MSP, and it was a leading provider of services to fast-growing SMBs. Hosted Network was so good, in fact, that other MSPs were asking the company to provide wholesale services. Hosted Networks has been exclusively serving MSPs since 2013, and as it steadily added customers, it needed to expand and streamline its network to support escalating growth.

"We were constantly increasing our network capacity," says Ben Town, managing director and founder of Hosted Network. "We reached a tipping point that required a more automated, high-performance network."

Automation Steers Growth Plans for Future-Oriented Network

On top of capacity needs, Hosted Network wanted to improve service reliability. The wholesaler began investigating customer premises equipment (CPE) as a way to improve its network. While attending an SD-WAN workshop, the tech team learned about the potential and power of Juniper.

"Our entry point to Juniper was around providing a standardized CPE solution that could be automated to simplify network processes for our MSP customers," Town says. "When we learned more about Juniper, it made sense to refresh the core network so we could have a common base for automation and use our Ansible functionality."

"The MX Series and SRX Series give us a common base for automation. We use Ansible functionality heavily already for automation, and the fact that Juniper is supported was a major deciding factor in choosing the platform. This allows us to manage everything from network-wide security changes through to providing customer self-service, and streamlining the provisioning of new services."

- Ben Town, managing director and founder, Hosted Network

The integration of Ansible and Juniper automation and orchestration tools factored heavily into Hosted Network's decision to choose Juniper. "We wanted to give our customers a better way to manage and provision IT resources," Town added.

Building an Advanced Network for the Wholesale Channel

Hosted Network relies on the Juniper Networks® MX204 Universal Routing Platform for the core network that connects its data centers in Melbourne, Perth, Queensland, and Sydney. The MX204 automation capabilities were as important as the performance and routing, switching, and security capabilities of MX Series 5G Universal Routing Platforms.

Juniper Networks SRX300 line of Services Gateways is deployed at customer sites. The SRX Series firewalls both protect the network perimeter and act as a pathway for the MSPs to automate the provisioning of new customers and introduce services and products.

"We chose the SRX320 for its modular cards," Town says. "It fit our customers' needs and gave us a standard CPE that makes it much easier for our customers and us. Instead of having to support and manage a range of different CPEs, we've standardised on a single platform that serves all our different requirements."

Hosted Network offers wholesale cloud and telecommunication services to Australian Managed Service Providers.

With SRX320 firewalls at customer sites, its MSP customers can roll out new services and applications across multiple locations and connect to the cloud. The SRX Series firewalls unify control of WAN connections across hybrid connections, and they manage and secure MPLS, broadband, and 4G LTE wireless links. Whatever connectivity demands Hosted Network's MSP customers throw at it, the SRX Series firewalls can handle it.

For security, the Juniper firewalls provide unified threat management to detect and proactively mitigate threats. The firewalls also provide a growth path with high-density native Gigabit Ethernet ports. Hosted Network is keen on the firewalls' automation features that work seamlessly with the MX Series platform. The SRX Series features on- and off-box automation that simplifies deployment across Hosted Network's numerous customer sites.

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Improved Network Gives MSPs Competitive Advantage

Even during the early stages of its automation journey, Hosted Network is realizing operational efficiencies. Customers are set up days faster than previously, and configuration errors from manual entries are dropping fast.

Automation is at the root of these improvements. New peering requests and security changes are easily added through Web forms, which is a major change from having a skilled engineer process the requests manually.

"Our DevOps team is building internal tools so customers can self-service," Town says. "Customers can place an order for a private network or new sites. The order flows to our provisioning team, and they can quickly process it. We are seeing measurable time savings, as it now takes only one-third of the time it used to take to make these types of changes."

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In another effort to better support its MSP customers, Hosted Network created a partner portal where MSPs can view the services they consume. "The partner portal provides lots of value to our customers and is giving them a better overall experience," says Town. "On our side, we don't need as many engineers thanks to automation and self-service functionality."

Using the SRX Series' easy configuration and deployment features, Hosted Network has developed a standard framework that is used to configure the firewalls. Hosted Network sends the SRX Series platforms to MSPs without having to unbox the kit, configure it, repackage it, and send it out to the customer. "We don't touch the SRX Series, and fewer touches means we're doing our part to prevent Covid-19 from spreading. We're all trying to be more hands off for health safety and efficiency," Town says.

Recently, Hosted Network introduced business nbn, a new broadband offering designed for its MSPs' business customers. "Juniper products are certified by the nbn and for Federal government use, which meant they met the certification requirements for virtually all our use cases," Town says. The higher capacity broadband business service is attracting lots of new customers to MSPs.

Need More Bandwidth for Business? No Problem

As Covid-19 continues to impact businesses, Town expects that MSPs will see even more requests for added network capacity and cloud services as people continue to work from home. Having a Juniper powered network allows Hosted Network to easily handle the increased demand.

"The desire for more business-grade broadband services and cloud services will push our capacity up," Town says. "With Juniper powering our core network, we can scale without worrying about performance or reliability and have a clean upgrade path as required."

An advanced Juniper network is also delivering the customer experiences that the MSPs need to grow their business.

"Our partners are getting a better experience so they can provide a better level of services to their customers," Town says. "The whole experience from service delivery through to support has improved. And ultimately when our partner and their end customer have a good experience, we gain repeat business from our MSPs. We're all able to build, grow, and succeed together."

For More Information

To find out more about Juniper Networks products and solutions, please visit www.juniper.net.

About Juniper Networks

Juniper Networks brings simplicity to networking with products, solutions and services that connect the world. Through engineering innovation, we remove the constraints and complexities of networking in the cloud era to solve the toughest challenges our customers and partners face daily. At Juniper Networks, we believe that the network is a resource for sharing knowledge and human advancement that changes the world. We are committed to imagining groundbreaking ways to deliver automated, scalable and secure networks to move at the speed of business.

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