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Why Your Network Team Needs IPAM – Unless You Really Love Spreadsheets

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Back in the old days, it was no sweat keeping track of IP addresses via spreadsheets or homegrown tools. That's because there was a lot less happening on the network ten years ago: There weren't nearly as many connected devices and the devices that were connecting to the network were corporate-owned. There was no such thing as BYOD, and the idea of actually running out of IPv4 address space someday wasn't exactly something that kept network teams up at night. Today, the network has changed. The steady growth of devices, as well as new pressures from virtualization and cloud, has made managing your IP infrastructure and IP addresses with spreadsheets pretty much impossible.

Network teams are under enormous pressure to maintain an elastic network infrastructure that is agile, flexible and scalable to support business growth and technological change. Network administrators have zero time in their busy day to keep the lovely static spreadsheets of IP addresses up-to-date and error-free. With the amount of tasks that administrators have to complete every day, the lack of an agile and automated IP address management solution can take a heavy toll on an organization. Manual processes are time-consuming, error-prone and add to the time and effort it takes to complete routine tasks such as getting a new user set up, configuring printers, provisioning virtual machines and on-boarding new devices.

Core networking equipment is essential to the company, however sometimes it's a pain for the network team – especially when they have to securely connect and track an ever-growing number of users and devices.

Just think about how many different devices a typical user brings to the office (or if the users are road warriors or work from home or at the local Starbucks, the devices that bring the office to them). Ten years ago, a typical employee or executive used possibly a single laptop along with their mobile phone. These days, in the era of hyper-connectivity, any user that comes into the office has a minimum of three to four devices in their bag. Those devices include a laptop, personal smart phone, tablet and possibly a second phone which is provided by the company. One of the guys I work with routinely carries six different devices around with him. All of these devices need to be registered, tracked and audited within companies for legal, security and compliance reasons. It's easy to see how a lack of automated provisioning and device on-boarding creates a tremendous burden for the network team.

So now the question is, what is the ultimate pain reliever for managing and tracking IP addresses, devices and users? The answer is IP Address Management (IPAM).

Network teams love IPAM because it makes them better at their jobs, more responsive to the needs of the business and saves them time and hassle every day. BlueCat's IPAM solution offers scalability, performance and centralized management of "everything IP" including IP addresses and core network services. CIOs love IPAM because it provides an elastic foundation of current and future network-dependent initiatives like virtualization, cloud and the Internet of Things.

IPAM will greatly reduce the time and effort network teams dedicate to managing large IP address spaces in an enterprise network. It will also optimize IP address utilization and avoid human errors in manually managing IP addresses that can lead to service disruptions.

Team members within the organization can manage their own IP address space to avoid conflicts when it comes to updating the organization on who has what IP address. Access rights along with other useful features can be implemented when it comes to accessing an IP space. Specific alerts can automatically notify a network administrator by email that an address utilization threshold is about to be reached, making the network team more proactive in managing their address and name space, and helping to avoid service disruptions caused by a lack of available IP addresses.

From network consolidation and modernization to dynamically provisioning VMs in the cloud, IPAM empowers network teams with powerful automation and self-service capabilities that allow them to keep pace with growth and change. To learn more about how BlueCat's IPAM solution can help you centrally manage all devices and service connections and ensure your DNS and DHCP core network services are always on and available, visit the link below.